A HISTORY OF THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

Volume IV

PARTS I & II

PAKISTAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
30 NEW KARACHI HOUSING SOCIETY
KARACHI
1970

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OF THE

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IN FOUR VOLUMES

1707-1947

VOLUME IV

1936-1947

Parts I & II

Part I

INTRODUCTORY

PREFACE

When the Board of Editors to which was assigned the task of preparing "A History of the Freedom Movement" in four volumes was wound up in 1960, the copyright of the book was given to the Pakistan Historical Society; it was also entrusted with the responsibility of completing the set and publishing the last volume which was to cover the period 1936-47.

We have decided to break the volume into three parts, of which Parts I and II are now being published. The chapters comprising Parts I and II of the book have been revised and edited at the request of the Society by Dr. I. H. Qureshi, Prof. A.B.A. Haleem and the undersigned.

Originally it was decided to include in this volume three separate chapters on the Aligarh Muslim University, the University of Dacca and the Osmania University, Hyderabad (Deccan). Since then however a comprehensive account of the foundation and progress of the Osmania University by Prof. H. K. Sherwani has been published in Dr. Ghulam Yazdani Commemoration Volume, Hyderabad (1966) it has therefore been considered unnecessary to include a Chapter in this volume.

Karachi : S. MOINUL HAQ
August 1970. General Secretary

CONTENTS

PART I

PART II

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER III

CHAPTER IV

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER VI

INTRODUCTORY

In 1935 the politics in the subcontinent entered an altogether new phase. The Government of India Act 1935 was bitterly criticised by all the political parties, yet they clearly discerned in it a departure from previous British constitutional measures. Provincial autonomy was to be assured immediately with a few safeguards relating to the minorities and special interests. For the first time real authority was to be transferred to the elected representatives of the people. Despite their protests the leaders of the Indian National Congress, because of their legal acumen and shrewd political sense, were aware of the inherent potentialities of the Act. They did not commit themselves to working it, because it was not in their interests to welcome any British measure, as that would have committed them to co-operation and would have taken the edge out of their struggle for full freedom. The difference in the attitudes of the Congress towards the Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935 is apparent from the facts that it boycotted the polls held under the former whereas it fought the elections under the latter seriously.

Superficially speaking the Congress decision to fight the elections of 1936-37 hastened the final rupture between the Congress and the Muslim League and paved the way for Pakistan. Of course, as has

been mentioned in the introductory chapter of Volume 1 of this book, the real causes of Hindu Muslim differences were much deeper and their roots spread into the entire history and volume of the relations between the two peoples. The events after the elections of 1936-37, however, triggered the forces of Muslim separatism into speedy activity. In the beginning when both the parties were making preparations for the elections, the Muslim League was very weak and the Congress could not envisage the extent of success that it was to achieve in the polls. It was not certain that it would carry out its programme without the co-operation of other political parties. The Congress had no need yet to shut its eyes to the liberal and progressive plank in the League programme. The League did not appear as a likely potent foe, hence there was no urge to malign it as a reactionary body. At that stage there seemed no harm in recognising the fact that the League was not likely to ally itself with the British in any possible attempt on their part to perpetuate their hold on the subcontinent. Indeed there was every indication that the Congress could rely on the support of the League in its twin tasks of winning freedom and ameliorating the lot of the masses. Therefore an understanding grew up between the two parties which enabled them to co-operate in many ways and to avoid any conflict.

The election returns, however, changed the position. The Congress achieved such overwhelming success in the Hindu constituencies that it required no support in forming governments in Hindu majority provinces. The Muslim League, because of its

organizational deficiencies and lack of unity in the Muslim ranks, had done so badly that its claim to represent Muslim sentiment more fully than other groups could not be taken seriously. In the Muslim majority provinces there were available groups, at least the reactionary and selfishly motivated ones, which could be enticed with hopes of office into supporting the Congress. The full significance of the elections had not been fully known even to the Hindu masses who mustered so strong under the Congress flag. It could not have been grasped by them that the coming War, only the faint rumblings of which could be heard at that time, would change the face of the world and that the provincial elections at that stage could decide the fate of the sub-continent. They supported the Congress because in their mind every success of the Congress would make it stronger for seizing the sceptre from the hands of the British and establishing Ram Rajya, a golden age of Hindu revival. The Muslims, on the other hand, had yet no central figure to whom they would instinctively give their loyal allegiance. Nor was the goal well defined. In a general way freedom was a good ideal, but where would they stand if the British were ousted without some guarantees from the Hindus ? For instance, which was a better choice ; an alliance with the Hindu members of the Unionist Party of the Panjab, whose co-operation had at least brought some positive gains, or a theoretical League-Congress entente that would bring political independence to the subcontinent at some future indefinite date ?

The Unionist Party of the Panjab had at least a consistent and concrete programme for protecting the interests of the rural community. Many other Muslim groups which were against the Congress-League understanding did not like the idea of belonging to a large party whose discipline would have little respect for their individual ambitions. They saw greater chances of advancing their personal interests in adherence to small cliques unencumbered with any ideological responsibilities. Quite a few of these, for instance, saw no harm in joining hands with the Congress later when it became sufficiently powerful to reward defections from the Muslim ranks. But such prospects did not seem to offer themselves when the elections were yet to be held. Most of the Muslim leaders, therefore, who were far less far sighted than the Hindu politicians, were not motivated with any terrible need for unity when they made up their minds about party affiliations in 1936 on the eve of the elections. The masses which were uneducated and unaware of the modest political stakes visible at that time were totally unmoved.

The polls revealed not only the weakness of the League but also the total disarray of Muslim politics and the utter helplessness of the politically disorganized and leaderless Muslim community. The Congress, on the other hand emerged as a powerful, well knit and strongly disciplined political machine that had captured the imagination of the Hindu masses. The Hindus gained greater confidence. They had been long aware of the fact that they formed an overwhelming majority of the population of

the subcontinent. They had known that they were economically stronger than the Muslims and educationally more advanced. Now they also realized that they were politically far better organized and disciplined because they were better led. They emerged as an invincible political force waiting for an opportunity to become the rulers of India. This realization electrified the entire community and changed its attitude not only towards the British but also towards the other communities, especially the Muslims.

It becomes easier to understand the subsequent events against this background which puts them into an intelligible pattern ; otherwise they seem somewhat inexplicable and have often been considered to be the outcome of merely a perverse dislike for moderation on the part of the Congress leadership. As the result of the accumulation of strength to politically organized Hinduism, the Hindu caravan was to march on towards its destiny of the rulership of the subcontinent and there was no force now left to slow down its progress, to create any obstacles or to deflect it even slightly. With this certainty came haughtiness, impatience with those who asked for a share in the expected blessings of freedom or safeguards for their interests and a contempt for those who seemed weak or not destined for the glory that awaited Hinduism. For it must be remembered that the Hindu mind looked upon India as a Hindu country and the sun of freedom was to be a Hindu sun, in which others were to have only such share as the Hindus thought reasonable and proper. Those who demanded real partnership were now

branded as reactionaries, anti-national and allies of the British.

The first breach came with Nehru's refusal to concede that the Muslim League, and, for that matter, any political party, could share power with the Congress in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) on the basis of a coalition. The condition laid down for taking in Muslim Leaguers was, in effect, simply that they should cease to be Muslim Leaguers and become members of the Congress Parliamentary Party. This attitude has been found inexplicable by some writers, but it was the logical result of the new Hindu feeling of exultation. On a different occasion it was crystallized in Nehru's statement that there were only two parties in the subcontinent, the British and the Congress. In view of the numerical insignificance of the other minorities and the weakness of the Muslims, this must have seemed a fair assessment of the situation to Nehru and his Congress colleagues. And this also was the assessment of the rank and file of the Hindu community which they betrayed in an absolutely changed behaviour towards their Muslim neighbours.

The conditions laid down by the Congress for acceptance of office in 1937 gave sufficient indication that it was determined to exploit its great strength to the full irrespective of the fears of the minorities. The safeguards provided in the instruments of instructions to the provincial governors had been interpreted by the Muslims as their protection against any unbridled use of authority by the majority affecting their interests adversely. These safeguards were

the first target of attack by the Congress under the pretence that any independent exercise of authority by the governors would whittle down the power of the democratically elected legislatures and the popular cabinets responsible to them. The Congress did succeed in extracting the promise that the governors would not exercise their authority under their special responsibilities. The majority community then became the arbiter in the matter of minority rights. To the Hindu leaders this seemed natural and perfectly justified in view of their destined responsibilities as the future rulers of India. But they forgot that they were not living in a uni-national state. The mechanics of democratic authority, if it is not to degenerate into the unbridled tyranny of a single racial, religious or communal group, must necessarily be different in multinational states. The assignment of special responsibilities to governors appointed by an alien government might not have been the happiest method of protecting the interests of the minorities. Indeed, as it transpired, the British government in its anxiety to please the powerful majority threw overboard its responsibilities towards the minorities and they, rather than the Hindu majority, should have been the first to see the inadequacy of the device.

However, that is beside the point. The important fact is that the Hindu leaders successfully sought to demolish the only device that had been provided without seeking to replace it by some other mechanism that would not have resulted in any diminution of native authority and would have reassured the minorities. What inhibited the Hindu leadership

or, for that matter, the entire Hindu community—from conceding at any time after 1937 that minority political interests needed any protection was their failure to accept the fact that India was not a uni-national state. This was due to their anxiety to hold the monopoly of power so that the glories of ancient Hinduism could be revived. From this stemmed all the conflicts that plagued and still plague the sub-continent.

It is natural for a people with such ancient traditions as the Hindus to have some nostalgia for the great achievements of their great ancestors. More than a millenium had elapsed since the departure of the ancient glories. The Hindus have never been noted for their sense of history, hence they easily fell into the trap of imagining that the ancient greatness could be recaptured through a process of conscious revivalism. They forgot that historical events had brought about fundamental changes in the social and ethnic environment of the subcontinent. It was no longer inhabited by peoples, who, whatever might have been their racial and linguistic differences had, through a long process of evolution, developed a homogeneity in philosophic concepts and social structure. These were great assets because they provided a base for further development in spite of serious divisions. There had been conflicts but they were within the context of the common pool of ideas. The Hindus had completely forgotten the period of sterile decay that had overtaken Hindu society on the eve of the Muslim conquest. This was not a brief period embracing a few decades but covered

more than five centuries after the decay of the Guptas. Indeed the Muslim conquest had not been made possible by the alleged other worldliness of Hindu spiritual and moral values as had come to be fondly imagined by the revivalists but by the rigidity of a religion that had come to place greater emphasis on meaningless ritual than true spiritual values.

Popular imagination, however, held the Muslim conquest responsible for the decline of all that had been glorious in the ancient history of the subcontinent. Foreign conquest does inhibit the political dominance of the conquered people but it does not necessarily choke all springs of achievement. Indeed there did take place a revival under Muslim rule which should be a source of pride to Hinduism ; because it was during Muslim rule that men like Chaitanya and Tulsidasa were produced and a religious feeling of rare depth enriched the life of the people and ennobled their character. It was impossible that the Hindus should cherish the memories of the Muslim rule, but they need not have cultivated the bitter hatred for it that became the hall mark of their speeches and writings. Indeed after the collapse of the Non-Cooperation Movement and the initiation of the Shuddhi and Sangathan movements, the Muslims had become the main targets of Hindu hostility. This was not a spontaneous emotional outburst, because how could the very masses which had so enthusiastically fraternized with the Muslims during the Non-Cooperation Movement turn against the Muslims without any provocation?

The proof of the truth of this statement is amply provided by the files of the Hindu newspapers in Hindi and Urdu. The author is familiar with only these two languages, hence he cannot make a similar statement with the same certainty about the press in other native languages, but he has learnt on reliable authority that Marathi, Gujrati and Bengali newspapers were no different. The Hindu Press was responsible for prosecuting a hate campaign of intensive bitterness against the Muslims. The Muslims were painted as villains responsible for abductions of Hindu women to increase their own population, as bullies who engineered brawls and riots and as disruptors of the Hindu Society in every conceivable manner. Historians have sometimes felt baffled why all this activity came immediately in the wake of the brief honey moon between the two communities. The answer is simple. The Muslims had demonstrated during the Non-Cooperation Movement their capacity for concerted political action if they were aroused. Their contribution in that movement, in spite of their numerical inferiority and economic and educational backwardness, was greater than that of the Hindus. Many Hindu leaders saw danger signals in this development. A community endowed with that spirit could not be expected to accept willingly the idea of a uninational India dominated by the Hindus. Hence a campaign was to be started with certain inter-connected aims in view. The Hindus were to be aroused to a sense of danger that their neighbours were active in stealing sheep from their fold by discreditable methods. The charge of the abduction of Hindu

women was, at least at that time, the most sensitive accusation that could be levelled against any one. The Hindus were organized into a paramilitary organization to fight the Muslims. For this purpose they were given training in groups as well as individually. To boost up their morale, they were encouraged to pick up quarrels with individual Muslims or to provoke riots by playing loud music in front of mosques at the time of congregational prayers, to take forcible possession of cows intended for slaughter or, where the Muslims were a small minority, to ask them to desist from *azan*, the Muslim call to prayers made from the mosques. Every riot left a legacy of bitterness. The press was controlled by the Hindus and every Muslim action was misrepresented as an action of unjustified agression. Simultaneously the Muslims were subjected to an economic boycott which became more and more severe as time passed. It is significant that it was during this period that Hindu thinkers like Har Dayal put out elaborate schemes for the absorption of the Muslims into the Hindu community. An intensive programme was launched to convert Muslims to Hinduism and social and economic pressures were exercised to force poor, ignorant and isolated Muslims to renounce their faith.

These facts have been mentioned because they all betray the attitude of the Hindus towards the future of the subcontinent. They desired a uninational state and were willing to adopt all methods that might become available. They were, however, confronted with the difficulty that the Muslims resist-

ed all such attempts. Now that authority was to pass into the hands of Hindus, should it not be utilized to intensify the effort ? It was not realised that authority can be used to suppress peoples but absorption is a different matter altogether outside the reach of power, especially if it is exercised without circumspection. And then the authority must be total and complete if the goal is to be achieved, but even then success will be elusive and doubtful, because the sense of entity is deeply engrained in the human mind as the result of long historical experience and attachment to communal or national characteristics and even to conscious and sub-conscious memories. When the Congress attained power at the provincial level, despite the surrender of their special responsibilities by the British provincial governors, its authority was by no means absolute, though it did extend to many spheres of life touching communal interests and sensitivities. Therefore it could not be exercised surreptitiously without arousing Muslim suspicions even if the Hindus had been tactful and farsighted, but they were neither. If they had been farsighted, they would have waited until they gained control at the national level. In the meanwhile they would have tried to allay Muslim suspicions and secured Muslim co-operation in ousting the British. Perhaps their idea was to crush the Muslims before they could demand their due share in authority. Whatever might have been the motive or the strategy, the Congress rule soon came to provide a good cover for Muslim baiting. And the Congress governments themselves shed all semblance of neutrality and

themselves began to behave in a manner that betrayed at least their emotional and ideological identity with those who indulged in the persecution of the Muslims. The result was that the Muslims, instead of accepting the designs of the Congress as inevitable, reacted strongly. The Hindus made it quite plain to them that this was but a mild foretaste of what was to come. What Muslim efforts could have achieved with some difficulty became easy because of policies adopted by the Congress governments.

In a way greater circumspection could have been expected from a political party which counted amongst its top leaders men of education and experience. But the Congress leaders were the first to succumb to the idea that they were on the threshold of supremacy in the subcontinent. Besides they were possessed by all the emotions that ruled supreme in the hearts of the extremist Hindu politicians. They wanted to see a revival of Hindu greatness and were intolerant of Muslim objections. Revivalism, therefore, was as dear to the Congress leaders as to the Mahasabhaites. The historian should not be misled by the Congress professions of nationalism and secularism even in the post independence two decades. Nationalism can have quite different connotations for men of different views. To the Congress leaders it meant Hindu nationalism. Secularism was popular in the international community and could be used for publicity purposes to enhance the prestige of the Indian government. Besides it would provide a protection to the politicians from undue interference from the pundits and the sadhus soaked in pre-

medieval superstitions. Otherwise it was of a nature that did not inhibit the Head of the State to inaugurate religious ceremonies for reconsecrating a temple at Verawal to the worship of the god Somnath. His original temple was destroyed by Mahmud of Ghaznih and now has been swallowed by the sea, but this archaeological fact was forgotten in the great flush of enthusiasm. The real history of the building now acclaimed as the one actually destroyed was of less significance than the fact that after having remained unused so long it was again to symbolize the power of resurgent Hinduism. It has also to be noted that the temple had been lying unused during the British period as well, but no attempt had been made to reclaim it for worship. Somnath had been destroyed by a Muslim conquerer, therefore all the fanfare which accompanied the ceremonies of resanctification could not, in any manner, be the result of rejoicing at deliverance from the British yoke, but quite obviously the celebrations demonstrated the fact that independence inaugurated an era of the revival of the prestige of Hinduism lost after the beginning of the Muslim rule. This incident has been narrated to show that the Congress was emotionally so involved in revivalism that it could not take a sober view of the situation. In fact a psychosis had been created which resulted in greater dislike for the fellow Muslim citizen than for the alien Britisher.

14 The Muslims now began to realize that the type of nationalism professed by the Hindu leaders had no place for them. The attitude of the Congress, from the day it decided to take office, disappointed

them because it was obvious that it believed in holding a monopoly of power ; but Congress rule was a real nightmare. The spate of anti-Muslim riots and the partiality of the Congress ministries were two facets of the same attitude. It was to be made plain to the Muslims that they would have to be content with being second class citizens in future. Power was also to be used for the cultural subordination of the Muslims. A diabolical system of education evolved under Gandhi's inspiration by two "Nationalist" Muslim educationists, Doctor Zakir Husain and Ghulam-us-Sayyidain, amongst others and known to history as the Wardha scheme was to be enforced in the teeth of Muslim opposition. It would have gradually demuslimized Muslim children by subjecting them to the philosophy that Hinduism and Islam were not too different and then exposing them to Hindu social influence and political domination. This has ever been the main weapon in the armoury of Hinduism when it has sought to absorb men of other beliefs into its fold. The implementation was even worse than the system itself, because Muslim children were to stand with folded hands and bent heads in a worshipful mood before a portrait of Gandhi and sing hymns to him. And Urdu was to be "simplified" by purging it of all words of Arabic, Persian and Turkish origin, even though they were in common use and replacing them with unfamiliar words of Sanskritic origin. And this language called Hindustani by the same Muslim educationists and Hindi Hindustani by Gandhi was to be written in the Devanagiri script with permission to write it in the Arabic script as well if some one so desired. Ulti-

mately with the majority and the government using the former, Urdu would disappear altogether except as a dialect in some areas. As Urdu was the vehicle of Islamic culture and Gandhi himself opposed it as a vehicle of "Quranic" ideas, the repurcussions of this linguistic revolution, if successful, would be too far reaching for the Muslims to like them. The Muslims were also distressed to see that such measures had been introduced with the co-operation of noted Muslim intellectuals. If Muslims of eminence could be utilized for propagating such ideas, what would happen in future ? or if they did not understand the implications of these actions, what reliance could they put on the Muslim "Nationalist" leaders in future, who in their enthusiasm would not weigh the disadvantages accruing to the Muslims from a measure, if it was, in their opinion, good for the "Indian nation" ?

The Congress rule in provinces, therefore, opened a new chapter in the history of Muslim politics in the subcontinent. Muslim intellectuals by far and large now began to see the futility of arriving at any understanding with the Hindus in their present mood. Their feeling grew more intense when Nehru launched his mass contact programme for the Muslims. He thought that with the resources of the Congress and its long experience in political activity, specially with the Congress seated in the place of power, he would be able to wean the Muslim masses away from Muslim leadership. The latter interpreted this as an attempt at the political *shuddhi* of the Muslims and took up the challenge in right earnest. History then

witnessed a remarkable change in the Muslim League. It realized that Nehru's strategy could be met only if it converted itself into a mass organization. The Muslim masses were so digusted with the Congress that Nehru's campaign left them cold, yet it could not be expected that the continuous efforts of the Congress would have no effect at all even if intensified and carried on incessantly.

The Muslim League came into the arena and gained phenomenal success. It was still not as well organized as the Congress, nor were the resources of the League so great. The main cause of the success of the League was the history of the Muslim community itself which had jealously guarded its entity at every juncture and was fully alive to the dangers of absorption into the Hindu milieu. It only needed sensitive, sincere and wise leadership which was provided by the Qa'id-i-Azam. The Congress ministries did not change their policies, nor did the Congress do anything to allay the fears of the Muslims. All it did was to mount a campaign of vilification against the League and its leadership. This did not succeed because now the issues were clear and it was not a question of personalities at all. The Congress charge that the League leadership consisted of knights and nawabs was particularly pointless because Jinnah's integrity and sincerity were famous and none of his lieutenants could be compared with many millionaire supporters of the Congress. In any case the League could by no stretch of imagination be called a coterie of self-seeking politicians. It was now a broad based organization with a platform and an

ideology that had a mass appeal. The Congress propaganda, therefore, succeeded only in further alienating the Muslims instead of convincing them.

It was during this period that the ideal of Pakistan gained popularity. It had been propagated again and again in various forms as a desideratum for the Muslims, but had attracted little attention. Around 1930 it had come to be put forward with greater enthusiasm by a Cambridge student, Choudhri Rahmat Ali and his group. Now with Hindu intentions having been exposed and hopes of a multinational state dashed to the ground, it suddenly began to gain popularity. Its success after the Congress had been in power for hardly a year astonished even the Cambridge group which had expected a long and arduous campaign to get it accepted even by the Muslims. The Muslim mind turned towards the idea of Pakistan without as much as its official endorsement by the Qa'id-i-Azam or the All India Muslim League. The Lahore Resolution of 1940 was, as is recognized in all quarters, the endorsement of a popular demand, not its initiation. The causes of the phenomenal acceptance of Pakistan as an ideal have been explained elsewhere by the present writer;[1] it would suffice here to say that it was the result of the instinctive attitudes of the Muslim community built up during the entire course of its history. What had been felt all the time in the subconscious, now came out into the open, removing all the cobwebs

1 I. H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pākistan Subcontinent*, The Hague, 1962, chapter xiv also *supra*, *v. i.*, chapter I (Introductory).

of confusion, making it as clear as daylight to the Muslims that their real destiny was neither a second class citizenship in a uninational Hindu state, nor even the doubtful partnership in a multinational India where the majority would consist of the Hindus whose most "nationalist" and liberal wing was represented by the Congress, but a separate nationhood with a separate homeland. When the goal became clear and the path was defined, the Muslims pursued it with a singleness of purpose and discipline that surprised their opponents.

It would be remembered that when some Muslim leaders began to talk about Pakistan before its demand being adopted by the League, the Muslim press was extremely weak. Even when the Lahore Resolution had been adopted in 1940, the Muslim League did not possess the barest nucleus of a properly organized publicity bureau or organs. The Lahore Resolution did not mention the word Pakistan. The popularity of the idea of Pakistan, therefore, cannot be explained away as merely the success of a publicity stunt or the result of the desire of the Muslim bourgeoisie to better their economic prospects. The latter would be belied by the tremendous sacrifices of the millions of people who left all their wealth and sometimes even personal belongings to migrate to a homeland that they could call their own. Indeed, but for our knowledge of the subconscious urges created by a long historical experience and memories, the entire phenomenon would have been considered to be inexplicable. The Lahore Resolution was only a mild statement of the crystallized feelings of the entire

community. However, the deficiency of publicity resources of the Muslim League was to some extent made up by the outpourings of the Hindu press. The entire idea was first ridiculed, then condemned and soon enough the demand for Pakistan was maligned as the brain child of British imperialism and its lackeys, allegedly the Muslim League leaders. It did not matter to the authors of such slanders that at the head of the Muslim League was a man, the Qa'id-i-Azam who had never been a friend of foreign rule and whose incorruptibility was and had always been above suspicion. And at last, as if to advance the biggest argument against their own allegations, the Hindu politicians offered him through the Congress the prime ministership of India after independence which was turned down with scorn as an impudent attempt to bribe a man who had never succumbed to such temptations.

When World War II started in 1939, the Congress was still not certain about the course it would adopt. The lesson of World War I had not been lost on its leaders who remembered that in spite of initial successes, Germany and her partners had been badly defeated. The technique of cooperating with the British Government during its difficulties and then pressing for a reward after the victory had paid certain dividends, even though these were not commensurate with Indian desires. Despite the limited success of such a strategy in the past, the Congress felt that it could be tried again. Hence Gandhi in a conversation with the Governor General made the statement : "I am not just now thinking of India's

deliverance. It will come but what will it be worth if England and France fall, or if they come victorious over Germany ruined and humbled ?" Nehru followed up by saying : "We do not approach the problem with a view to take advantage of Britain's difficulties . . . in a conflict between democracy and freedom on the one side and fascism and aggression on the other, our sympathies must inevitably be on the side of democracy . . . . I should like India to play a helpful part and throw all her resources into the struggle for a new order."

These statements were made presumably in the hope that the British would take them at their face value and begin to look upon the Congress leaders as fellow fighters in the same cause. This would result, according to Congress calculations, in the transfer of at least greater de facto power into the hands of the political leaders, the lion's share of which would go to the Congress, because of its overwhelming majority. The British, understandably, did not react in the manner the Congress had expected. They wanted to win the war and to gain as much cooperation of the people of the subcontinent as they could without foregoing the authority to mobilize its human and material resources. At that stage that seemed to be quite a feasible policy. True, the war effort could not muster mass support and enthusiasm, but could the Congress be trusted to deliver the goods ? Was there any certainty that having gained access to the control of material resources, the Congress would not exploit the situation to its own advantage irres-

pective of its impact on the British interests, specially those relating to the War ?

When the Congress found that its expressions of sympathy and good intentions did not produce the desired response, it withdrew its offers of cooperation and directed its ministries to resign, which they did between 27 October and 15 November 1939. At this the Muslims heaved a sigh of relief. To them it seemed the end of a nightmare. The Muslim League organized a Day of Deliverance on 22 December, 1939 and its success demonstrated the depths of Muslim feelings of resentment against Congress policies.

Gradually it became obvious that the British and their allies were not faring well at all and it was realized by all political observers that much greater difficulties lay ahead which might result in defeat. Hitler's armies looked invincible because they carried all before them. Japan's success in the Pacific and nearer home in the East Indian Archipelago, Malaya and Burma led many to think that British ouster from Asia was imminent. At that time the British came desperately conscious of the need of reconciling opinion in the subcontinent and Cripps was sent with proposals for the settlement of the political problem. The British Government probably had realized that the area immediately adjoining Burma was overwhelmingly Muslim, therefore, the Muslim League could not be ignored. Hence there was a provision in the proposals under which a Muslim majority province could remain outside the Indian Union. This was totally unacceptable to the Congress. Besides Gandhi

was now almost certain that the days of British rule were numbered. Therefore he called the proposals "a post dated cheque on a crashing bank." He and his colleagues were quite willing to take over "the crashing bank" to be able to dominate over the minorities and to possess the authority to negotiate with any power that might emerge victorious. When these hopes were not realized, Gandhi, Nehru and the rest of them forgot their love of democracy and dislike of fascism and took advantage of Japan's presence in Burma to create serious difficulties for the British.

What happened thereafter filled the Muslims with consternation. Gandhi threw all pretensions of non-violence to the winds and launched a campaign to oust the British from India. He gave the slogan 'Quit India' to his followers, which was shouted in the streets and inscribed on every wall. He exhorted his followers "to do or die". All this led to violent demonstrations and even riots all over the subcontinent, but the main theatre of this activity was Bihar and the eastern districts of the United provinces. This area was obviously chosen because of its proximity to the front against the Japanese in Burma. Only Muslim Bengal was in between. The strategy was well chosen. Railways were the main target of attack to disrupt communications with Burma. The civil government was virtually reduced to helplessness and near anarchy prevailed in these areas. Even British observers were not certain whether the situation would be controlled, especially if other parts of the subcontinent became similarly affected. This

did not happen because the Congress had wanted to inherit an orderly dominion, not anarchy. Therefore the plans to create anarchic conditions did not embrace other districts.

The Muslims were affected in two ways. They saw it quite clearly that if the Congress succeeded in forcing the British to surrender to it, the Muslim cause would be lost. It would take years and years of struggle and perhaps bloodshed to force the Congress to agree to Pakistan. A triumphant Congress sitting in the place of authority and a weakened and war weary British government were quite different propositions. Indeed it did not take a prophet to see that the British would quit India anyhow. The real question was who would succeed them. The Congress wanted to hustle the British out unceremoniously so that it could snatch authority over the entire subcontinent. The Hindu nationalists had already their men in the Japanese camp who seemed destined to conquer the subcontinent. Subhas Chandra Bose had mysteriously disappeared and was now organizing Indian prisoners of war into armed subsidiaries of the Japanese army. In case of Japanese victory, therefore, the Congress hoped to get good terms from the conqueror. After all some government would be set up in India, and who could be better than Congress leaders to man it? The Muslim League had not resorted to such tactics and could not hope to reap any benefits from a Japanese victory. Hence the Qa'id-i-Azam was quite right in declaring that the Congress campaign was not so much against the British as against the Muslims. All

these facts of the situation might not have been present in the minds of the rank and file, but the attitude of the Congress agitators was no smaller an eye opener to the Muslim masses. Any Muslim venturing into Hindu localities was severely man-handled. If he happened to wear a beard, invariably the ruffians would pull it. This is considered to be most insulting and because a beard is quite often the mark of Muslim orthodoxy, the enormity of such behaviour was great in the eyes of the Muslims. No Englishman was molested. All the hostility was directed against the Muslims.

The 'do or die' movement failed after its initial success and Gandhi and other Congress leaders were arrested and the Congress was declared an illegal body. The Cripps offer had at least shown to the Hindus as well as the Muslims that the demand for Pakistan could no longer be dismissed lightly. If the realities of the situation had forced a pro-Congress British government to entertain the possibility of a future Indian Union not covering all the areas of the subcontinent, surely some concession would have to be made to Muslim sentiment. Rajagopalachari, the only realist, it seems, in the entire Congress high command, was the first to give some serious thought to this question.He, therefore, prepared the well-known formula associated with his name and first showed it to Gandhi while he was fasting in the prison. Gandhi gave his approval and later the formula was published on 10 July 1943. This finally led to the famous Gandhi Jinnah talks in September, 1944. Hopes of a Congress League settlement rose high

among the masses, but in actual fact the chances of any agreement were remote. Gandhi and his associates were not led by any genuine desire to meet the Muslim demand. It was only an attempt to persuade the Muslims to barter their desire for independent sovereign existence for a promise of regional autonomy and to create an impression upon the international world that the Congress was not unreasonable and was anxious to arrive at a settlement with the Muslims so that power could be transferred to the Indians. A perusal of the talks would lead any rational leader to the conclusion that Gandhi and Jinnah were unable to find a meeting point in the course of their discussions and that their arguments ran on completely parallel tracks. At no stage did Gandhi show any understanding of the Muslim point of view. He tried uniformly to shackle the Muslims within the bounds of an extended provincial autonomy ; the territories and the jurisdiction of the regional government were to be defined by a commission appointed virtually by the Hindu majority after it came to power. Who could blame Jinnah for refusing to fall into the trap ?

After the breakdown of Gandhi Jinnah talks, it seemed that the Congress and the Muslim League could not reach any agreement without outside assistance. Within the subcontinent itself there was no party that could even pretend sufficient neutrality to make an endeavour to bring about an understanding. It became quite clear from the attitude of the various groups that the dispute was entirely different in nature from those differences that can be resolved

by consultations amongst parties who believe in common objectives and differ only in their programmes. The Muslim League had travelled very far from the elections of 1936-37. It no longer stood for a mere political programme ; now its objectives were of a fundamental nature. Through its own hard work, even more because of its advocacy of Pakistan, it had come to gain the overwhelming support of the Muslim masses. A few politicians and some splinter groups amongst the Muslims who differed, had no following. The Hindus, to whichever group they belonged were wedded to ideals of an undivided India and a uninational state. The issues were now so clearly defined and so basic in nature that they admitted of no compromise. Besides, they deeply involved the emotions and the loyalties alike of the Hindus and the Muslims. The other minorities thought it wiser to side with the stronger contestant, the Hindus. Hence efforts like Tej Bahadur Sapru's to put forward allegedly neutral proposals were doomed to failure, because they only underlined the Congress point of view. The Sapru proposals published on 8 April, 1945 were not only palpably one sided, but also highly unrealistic. They did not concede even as much as Gandhi was willing to consider on the basis of Rajagopalachari formula.

Great pressure was building up on the British government to find some solution. The United States was anxious that the Indian problem should be settled. Besides the British government felt that it no longer had either the will or the strength to hold on to India. Wavell, therefore, was summoned to

London and he came back to make an effort to persuade the Congress and the League to agree to the constitution of an interim government. The thinking seemed to be that the burden of a common responsibility to run the government in a critical period with all the problems created by the war to be solved would generate understanding and bring about co-operation. The Simla conference of 1945 was convened with this end in view. It is obvious from their attitude in the conference that the British had yet not grasped the essence of the problem. They approached the question as if they were dealing with political parties, whereas they were in fact dealing with two nations and a few marginal subnational groups. Wavell, therefore true to the British tradition insisted that the Muslims of the Panjab should be represented in the government by the Muslim group in power in that province. Jinnah, however, could not agree to such a proposal without discarding the entire philosophy of his struggle. He wanted the question to be discussed on the assumption that the Muslim League represented the Muslim nation and was not merely an Indian political party. The conference broke on that issue and Jinnah was blamed all round for its failure. His crime was that he did not oblige the British and the Hindus by giving up his insistence on the right of the Muslim League to represent the Muslims. Wavell more justifiably took the blame upon himself. Of course he was working under the instructions of the British government. Neither he nor the government that he represented had reached the stage where they could

recognize the fact that the Muslims did form a separate nation. The British, therefore, wanted to put the claims of the Congress and the League to the test. How far did the Congress represent the entire population of the subcontinent ? Did the Muslim League really represent the Muslims when it claimed a separate nationhood for them ?

Wavell, therefore, announced on 21 August, 1945 that elections to the central and provincial legislatures would be held in the following winter. After the elections a constitution making body would be set up to decide the future political set up of the subcontinent. The elections were fought by the League on the straight issue of Pakistan. The results were a convincing proof of the fact that the Muslim League had the overwhelming support of the Muslims. All the Muslim seats of the central legislature fell to the League and in the provinces it captured 428 seats out of 492. This happened in spite of the combined efforts of the Congress and the Muslim dissident groups. No more convincing answer could be given to the Congress propaganda that the League represented only a handful of vested interests and that the masses were with the Congress. With the claim of the Muslim League that it alone represented the Muslims proved, the British felt that there could be no justification for ignoring the claim of the League that it was truly representative of the Muslims.

On 19 February 1946 the British Government announced its intention of sending "a special mission of Cabinet ministers" to hold discussions with Indian politicians regarding the method of framing a consti-

tution and to secure the agreement of the political parties on the appointment of an executive council that would have their support. The Muslims were aware of the deep understanding existing between the Labour Party of the United Kingdom and the Indian National Congress. They were apprehensive regarding the intentions of the British government. Their fears were not unfounded as has been revealed in recent Indian writings recording the secret meetings between the members of the Cabinet Mission and some important Congress personages or the latter's influential emissaries. Indeed a substantial indication came from a statement that Attlee made in the House of Commons on 15 March 1946 in which he went out of his way to say "...*we can not allow a minority to place their veto on the advance of the majority*." It was, therefore, necessary that both the Government and the Congress should not be left in any doubt about the Muslim determination to achieve Pakistan and to surmount all obstacles that might be created in their way as the result of the Hindu-British entente. Hence the Qa'id-i-Azam convened a convention of all the legislators elected on the Muslim League ticket in April 1946. H. S. Suhrawardy moved a resolution defining the aim of the Muslim League as the establishment of a "sovereign independent state, comprising Bengal and Assam in the North-East zone and the Panjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the North-West zone." This was adopted unanimously and enthusiastically. The British were told clearly in the resolution that they could not expect any co-

operation from the Muslim League in the formation of the interim government if they did not accept the Muslim demand of Pakistan.

The resolution should also set at rest the controversy regarding the fact whether it was intended that the Muslim majority areas should form one state. The creation of a single sovereign state was the desire of the properly elected representatives of the Muslims, because the Muslim League lagislators did represent an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of the subcontinent. The population of North-West Frontier Province had voted for the Congress but the position was rectified by the plebiscite that was held later. There could have been no more a representative gathering nor a clearer decision. It should also be remembered that the Lahore Resolution of 1940 did not mention Pakistan specifically. Even if it be conceded that the resolution envisaged more than one state, it could not bind posterity for ever to prevent the coalescence of these states into a federation or even a unitary state. The integration of these states into a single entity was taken for granted when the demand for Pakistan was pressed on Gandhi, on Cripps, by the convention and on the Cabinet Mission. Surely all this could not have been done without wide national consensus. And then it was endorsed by the acceptance of 3 June Plan when the Legislative Assemblies of Panjab and Bengal decided to accept or reject amalgamation into Pakistan and when the assemblies of the constituent units sent their representatives into the Constituent Assembly for Pakistan. What were all these bodies doing if

not endorsing the creation of *one* Pakistan ? It should be remembered that the idea of Pakistan evolved gradually like so many other ideas. When Iqbal and Rahmat Ali advocated a Muslim State in the North-West areas of the subcontinent, their conception was different from what actually emerged. And what did emerge as the result of the agreement of all concerned is both legally and politically more binding than any idea mooted at a previous stage in the evolution of the concept of Pakistan.

The fears of the Muslim League legislators led to a few intemperate speeches which were subsequently seized upon by Hindu and British authors alike to prove that the Muslims were at fault in provoking the holocaust that enveloped the subcontinent on the eve of and after independence. This is to violate all canons of historical analysis, because it ignores the elaborate preparations made by the Rashtriya Svem Seva Sangh, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Sikh states, especially Patiala and many right wing Congressites. It takes no cognizance of the terrible massacres in Bihar, in Alwar, in East Panjab, in Kashmir and elsewhere. An intemperate statement made in a state of excitement cannot be weighed in the same scales as large scale massacres. The excesses committed in the Muslim majority areas were highly deplorable, but a fair study of choronology, of preparations and organization at the back of each and every disturbance, and of the stated aims of certain leaders and their followers will yield more reliable conclusions. The convention had met in an atmosphere charged with emotions. The Muslim

League did want to impress upon all and sundry, specially the British and the Congress, that the Muslims were in dead earnest and those who ignored their sentiments would be asking for trouble. Therefore each participant made a pledge of loyalty to the ideal, to be bound by discipline and "to undergo any danger, trial or sacrifice that might be demanded" of him.

The Cabinet Mission reached Delhi on 24 March, 1946. It carried on negotiations and then sought to seek support for a plan that did not concede Pakistan. Instead it suggested a three tier constitution. The League showed willingness to make it a basis of discussion, but the reaction of the Congress was unfavourable. Having failed to get the agreement of the political parties, the Mission came out with its own plan. It advanced the stock British and Hindu arguments against Pakistan. If conceded as demanded, it would contain large non-Muslim minorities. If Panjab and Bengal were divided it would please neither the Muslims who wanted the whole of Panjab and Bengal nor the Hindus who did not want their partition. Indeed the real position was that in their behind the scene negotiations, the Mission had failed to bring the Congress round to any solution that would be even remotely acceptable to the Muslims. Therefore Pakistan as a sovereign state was to be sacrificed and the Muslims were given the consolation prize of the creation of two Muslim mojority groups. The Congress was so conscious of the power of its lobby in the Labour Party and the anxiety of the British to come to

terms with it that it was in no mood to accept the plan as a whole. It jubilantly accepted the rejection of Pakistan but began to question the grouping of the provinces. The essence of Congress objections was based in its total rejection of a multinational Indian Union. The desire to dominate over others was so deeply rooted in Hindu hearts that it would not permit any weakening of the uninational principle. What happened after the publication of the Plan is well known and finds mention at the proper place in this book. However, it can be understood only if the Hindu insistence upon the achievement of a uninational state is kept in view.

For the Muslim League this was a critical situation. Knowing fully well that the British and the Congress were united in their opposition to the creation of Pakistan, the Qa'id-i-Azam had two choices before him. He could flatly refuse to consider any offer which fell short of a sovereign Pakistan and permit the transfer of power to the Hindus on their terms. That would involve a struggle against a government which would be unitary in its nature and ruthless in its approach in dealing with a subsequent struggle for Pakistan. The other was to accept the Plan as a half way house to Pakistan. The Muslims would have considerable constitutional and some real power in their majority areas to prevent any ruthless exercise of power by the central government to prevent them from carrying on the struggle for Pakistan. The question of giving up the goal of complete sovereignty did not arise at all. Being disappointed at this denial of justice

they had to think out a method that would not leave them entirely helpless. Hence they accepted the Cabinet Plan as the first step towards full sovereignty. They never made a secret of the fact that they would continue to work for the achievement of Pakistan and were accepting the plan only as an interim step. It would have been foolish to permit the Hindus to get into the vantage position of full authority. It must be realized that time was running short and the Qa'id-i-Azam had correctly assessed the attitude of the British as well as the Hindus. The British wanted to quit and to hand over authority to some one, preferably one government, which meant essentially to the Hindus, because their major interests, political, commercial and strategic, demanded good relations with Hindu India. They were, therefore, in no mood to please the Muslims by annoying the Hindus, nor were the Hindus, conscious of these facts, in a mood of compromise.

This was demonstrated by the fact that they did not accept the Plan gracefully. They thought that they had cornered the Muslims who, in the last resort, would have no choice but to accept whatever the British and the Hindus agreed to dole out to them. Azad has lamented the impetuous statements of Nehru. Earlier Gandhi had said practically the same thing. Azad forgets that Nehru's statements correctly portrayed his intentions. If Nehru had not openly come out with those statements, the British and the Muslims alike would not have realized the futility of constitutional safeguards in the

face of the determination of the Hindus to ignore them at a time when no one could have prevented bloodshed and chaos. It was just as well that Hindu intentions were made clear. If they had not been stated so plainly, the outcome would not have been the unity of the subcontinent within a single state as Azad thinks but anarchy and chaos. The British were talking constitutionally, the Muslims were looking at the Plan from a legal angle, Nehru was speaking *realpolitik*. He may be accused of tactlessness, because if he had kept his ideas to himself, he would have had an opportunity of showing his hand later, and because he blurted out his thoughts, he lost the opportunity of putting his intentions into effect. Now Nehru was a politician of no mean intelligence. If he had not thought that he would get away with his scuttling of the Plan, he would not have done so. This confidence was based in his knowledge of the fact that the British were so anxious to placate the Hindus that Nehru could play duck and drake with the Plan without running into the danger of being thwarted in his action.

All politicians are liable to make miscalculations and Nehru was no exception. He should have realized that the British regard for the Hindus was not altruistic. Their interests could not be served if chaos prevailed in the subcontinent and there could be little doubt that chaos would rule supreme if a minority of a hundred million felt frustrated and insecure after it had been aroused to such a deep desire of independent existence. There could be some hope of the Muslims not going beyond the

limits of constitutional action if the Plan were implemented fully in spirit as well as in letter. But how could even a community with such traditions of lawful behaviour as the Muslims be expected not to react violently to attempts at their total subjection ? Therefore it was not in British interests to provoke the Muslims into violent action. Hence, to the extent that it was possible for the British to do so, they would not be a party to the creation of chaos in the subcontinent. And they would not go along with the Hindus to the extremities of folly.

And yet they could go to great lengths to please the Hindus. This would be apparent to any one who studies the British behaviour in connection with the constitution of the interim government. All the facts and British commitments in that connection are well known and are described in detail elsewhere in this book. The British commitment was clear and unequivocal : "in the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a Coalition Government on the above lines, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of the Interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the statement of 16 May." On 25 June the Congress rejected the offer and the League accepted it. Now the tables were turned against the British. And what happened clearly exposed their hopes and intentions. They had obviously hoped that Pakistan not having been conceded, the Muslims would reject the offer and the Congress would accept it. In that case the League would be left in the cold and the Congress

would form the government. The Congress also had hoped that the League would refuse to join the Interim government. But both of them had forgotten that the League possessed in the person of the Qa'id-i-Azam a political strategist who could defeat them at their own game. He placed the British in a quandary. They had no intention of putting the League alone into office, nor indeed was it feasible for them to do so. But then they should not have made the commitment. They had now to eat their words. And then they proceeded calmly, without as much as consulting the League, to form a government with only the Congress. "The Secretary of the State for India had asked the Viceroy to make an offer to Nehru to form a Government and not to see Jinnah with a view to persuading him to enter the Government." Partiality could hardly go any further.

The interim government was formed, the League was left out. The Muslims were deeply frustrated and it seemed they had completely lost the battle. Pakistan had been denied ; the most essential feature of Cabinet Plan from their point of view had been, it seemed, successfully sabotaged ; the British had once gone back upon their pledged word and now had completely bypassed them in the formation of the interim government, putting the Hindus in the seat of power and the next step could only be the transfer of authority to them. The Labour Government had demonstrated its utter disregard of Muslim interests. Wavell's plea that the swearing in of the new Executive Council should be postponed until the Muslim League could be persuaded to come in was dismissed,

because Attlee, true to his dislike for Jinnah and the Muslim League, did not want to "exacerbate the tempers of the Congress Party leaders" and risk a break with them. Nehru was installed on 2 September 1946, and a leading member of the Congress jubilantly said, "we must now consider ourselves rulers of this land." No less a person than Winston Churchill was of the opinion that the installation of a Hindu government was responsible for the large scale riots that ensued, and in his words produced a "series of massacres unparalleled since the Indian Mutiny of 1857."

Wavell did have the sense of seeing this danger and the sensitivity to feel the terrible loss of life, both pointing in the direction of a complete breakdown of all authority and the emergence of anarchy that would be impossible to control later. This was a contingency that the British had wanted to avoid at any cost. Wavell's pleading with the Congress to take heed of the tremendous killings fell on deaf ears. He was aghast at their indifference to bloodshed. This led to his unpopularity with the Hindus, who brought about his virtual dismissal with disgrace. Nevertheless he tried to do his duty and, after protracted negotiations with Jinnah persuaded the Muslim League to join the Interim Government. Jinnah also had seen the results of a Hindu Government exercising authority in the shape of terrible killings of the Muslims. Besides, he must prevent the transfer of power to a Hindu government. Therefore with his usual statesman-like vision he agreed to the League entering the government. The

Congress accepted the position with a total lack of grace, grumbling at the personnel and quarrelling on the distribution of the portfolios.

The League's entry into the government was the beginning of the turning of the tide. The battle was now carried into the Council itself, percolating downwards to the clerks and even the messengers. Nehru's pretensions to prime ministership were totally demolished. Indeed the Congress strategy to entrust the League with the portfolio of Finance in the hope that the Muslims could never make a success of financial administration backfired, because Liaquat Ali Khan was able to present a budget that gave greater benefits to the poorer classes at the cost of the capitalists, who were almost entirely Hindus. The Congress could not protest because the budget only sincerely translated into practice what the Congress politicians had been preaching so long. And the burden upon the rich was not unreasonable. Nehru was no longer the head of a government accepting the principle of joint responsibility. The Executive Council did not work like a cabinet; it consisted of two dissident factors. The Congress leaders, who were themselves responsible for alienating Muslim feelings and had no taste for a bi-national form of government, felt exasperated, because they discovered that the presence of a differently motivated element in the Government would not permit them to carry out their policies unchallenged. They began to feel that it was better to hand over a part of the territory to the Muslim League than to feel thwarted in the exercise of full authority in the entire subcontinent. Patel, more

than other members of the Congress group, felt that any method would be good enough to drive the Muslim League out of the central government, even conceding Pakistan if necessary.

By the end of July 1946 the Constituent Assembly had been elected. On 20 November after warning the British government that if the Congress proceeded to frame a constitution in accordance with their ideas, the subcontinent would be plunged into a civil war, Wavell issued invitations for the first meeting. The League had previously declared that in view of the interpretation put upon the grouping clause by the Congress it would not participate in the deliberations of the Assembly, nor would its proceedings have any validity. At this the Congress grew more aggressive in its demand for the removal of the League from the Executive Council. The British Government could not ignore these developments. Despite its open partialty for the Congress and continuous efforts to placate it, the Labour Government had to take cognizance of the fact that the very purpose for which it was placating the Congress would be frustrated if civil war broke out in the subcontinent, because British interests could not be safeguarded if the transfer of power was followed by a complete breakdown of law and order, and rank anarchy. This was already happening in the shape of unprecedented mass killings. It was, therefore, decided to invite two Congress and two Muslim League leaders for discussions. Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Nehru and Baldev Singh reached London on 2 December 1946. The talks were fruit-

less. The British Government reiterated its interpretation of the grouping clause. The Congress refused once again to accept the British view and the deadlock continued.

At long last the British recognized that the Cabinet Plan was unworkable, because a delicately balanced arrangement like that could succeed only if it was respected in letter and in spirit by those entrusted with working under it. The Congress had shown its utter disregard for the very essence of that arrangement. Hence the British Government came out with a statement on 6 December 1946 that almost conceded some kind of a Pakistan. For it was announced that any constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly could not be forced upon unwilling parts of the subcontinent. This formed part of the declaration that the talks had been fruitless.

Here even the most sober historian may indulge in a little speculation. Were the talks realy fruitless? Was there a real breakdown ? Ostensibly the statement was correct ; but the question arises : could the British Government have come out with such a solution of the problem with any hope of its acceptance without the consent of the Congress ? A government that had so much regard for Hindu sensitivities could not have accepted the final remedy of partition without the approval of the Congress. A cabinet that would not as much as postpone the meeting of the Constituent Assembly for the fear that the Congress would be annoyed and had directed the Governor-General that the Congress should

be invited to join the Executive Council and leave Jinnah in the cold, could not suddenly awake to the need of placating Muslim opinion that insisted upon Pakistan. The subsequent policies of the British Government show that its understanding with the Congress was never weakened. The manner in which 3 June Plan was drawn up, the way in which the actual partition took place, the injustice of the Boundary Award and Mountbatten's action in accepting accession of Kashmir, all show that the essential features of the British policies had the approval of the Congress. It seems reasonable, therefore, to think that the Congress agreed to partition because it wanted to be the sole master in the Hindu areas. It made a show of listening to the British, who wanted some solution desperately, and extorted in exchange all the concessions that it considered necessary for extending its power and crippling Pakistan. And a deal must have been made before the leaders were invited to London, where Nehru's final consent might have been obtained. There seems to be little rationale of the British decision in favour of Pakistan without this assumption. And with this working hypothesis, the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle of the British policy in 1946-47 fall into an intelligible pattern.

The Muslims did not get all that they had wanted. They did not get even what should have belonged to them according to all canons of justice. They inherited many problems that need not have arisen at all if the British had not succumbed at every

step to Congress pressure. Even then the Muslims did get what was much greater than the disadvantages accruing from a raw deal. They fought for and obtained a sovereign independent state. They were able to achieve this because of their own invincible determination and the inspiring, wise and devoted leadership of the Qa'id-i-Azam.

Part II

1936-1947

CHAPTER I

THE CONGRESS IN OFFICE

(1937-1939)

The year 1935 saw the peoples of India on the threshold of a major constitutional change. A joint committee of the two houses of the British Parliament had made its recommendations on constitutional reform in India. The Central Legislative Assembly of India was invited to discuss the Report of the Committee and express its opinion. When the Report came up for discussion early in February 1935 the leader of the Congress party, Bhulabhai Desai, moved an amendment to the official motion for consideration of the Report. His amendment was to the effect that as the proposed new constitution had been 'conceived in a spirit of imperialist domination' it should not be introduced. The amendment, however, was rejected, the Congress party members (numbering 44) alone voting for it. Their attitude was unrealistic, as they knew well that the provincial part of the constitution, even though it had objectionable features, transferred substantial power to Indian hands, and they themselves would work it eventually. It was left to M. A. Jinnah as leader of the Independent Party (consisting of 22 members of whom 18 were Muslims) to make a weighty and constructive contribution to the debate.

The scheme recommended by the Committee was in two parts—one proposing a Federation of Indian Princely states and British Indian provinces, and the other conferring autonomy on provinces. Another aspect of the Report was the Communal Award which fixed the proportion of representation of various communities and interests in the legislatures. The position was that the Federal part was most retrograde and harmful, especially from the Muslim point of view: the Provincial scheme had some objectionable features such as special powers of Governors, provisions relating to Police, Secret Service and Intelligence Departments etc., but it did represent a substantial advance on the existing position. As for the Communal Award given by the British Prime Minister, Ramsay McDonald, it held the field in the absence of any agreed solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem. Jinnah adopted a realistic approach and displayed political acumen and strategy of a high order. His party held the balance between supporters of the Government and the Congress party, and he used this position in the interests not only of the Muslims but of India as a whole.

The amendment moved by Jinnah to the original motion for consideration of the Report was in three parts. The first part recommending acceptance of the Communal Award till an agreed solution were found was carried, the Congress party remaining neutral and Government supporting ; the other two parts characterising the Provincial scheme as 'unsatisfactory and disappointing' and totally rejecting the Federal scheme

and calling for establishment in British India alone of real and complete responsible government were carried, the Congress supporting and Government opposing. The result of the debate was hailed as a personal triumph for Jinnah, his political sagacity and parliamentary skill. It was obvious that unless there was at least a truce on the communal front which meant acquiescence in, if not willing acceptance of, the Communal Award, there could be no constitutional advance.

In the summer of 1935 the Government of India Act based on the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee was passed by the British Parliament. The Act embodied the Communal Award and provided for provincial autonomy, even though hedged in by some limitations, to be followed by the establishment of a Federation of British Indian provinces and Indian Princely states upon fulfilment of certain conditions. The Federation envisaged in the Act was centripetal in spirit and character, as representation in both Houses of the Federal Legislature was to be based on population and not, as in all other Federations, on the equal representation of the federating units in one House, and 'residual powers' were to be allotted by the Governor-General at his discretion. This was a concession to 'unitarianism' favoured by the Hindu majority. The presence of the Princes and their representatives, most of whom would be Hindus, would have further weighted the Federal Legislature and the Federal Executive in favour of the Hindu majority. Dyarchy was removed from the provinces but introduced at the Federal Centre.

Gandhi had renounced his formal membership of the Congress in 1934. Perhaps this made it easier for other Congress leaders to modify their policy of non-co-operation. The Congress contested the elections to the Central Legislative Assembly in the autumn of 1934 and won 44 seats. The Congress Party led by Bhulabhai Desai and the Independent Party (mostly Muslim) led by Jinnah often cooperated in the Assembly and voted down Government measures, so that on a number of occasions the Governor-General had to use his power of 'certification'. The gesture of good-will and cooperation made by Jinnah, however, was not appreciated by the Congress leaders and they did not carry cooperation to the general political field and the provincial sphere. In 1936 and 1937 Jawaharlal Nehru was President of the Congress. He propounded the doctrine of revolutionary nationalism and condemned the 1935 Act as 'a new charter of slavery' which must be rejected root and branch. He did not oppose Congress's participation in the forthcoming Provincial elections but he strongly disapproved of the Congress taking part in any Provincial Government, saying, "It would be a fatal error for the Congress to accept any office. That would inevitably involve cooperation with the British Imperialism."[1] Many Congressmen, however, seemed to harbour a desire to get control of the Provincial administration.

Outwardly the election manifesto adopted by the Congress endorsed Nehru's view that it would enter

1 Coupland, R.: *India, a Restatement*, London, 1945, p. 152.

the provincial Legislatures 'not to cooperate in any way with the Act but to combat it and seek the end of it,' but it postponed a decision on the question of acceptance of office till after the elections. On the Hindu-Muslim question the Congress adopted an equivocal attitude. While condemning the Communal Award as inconsistent with democratic principles and disruptive of Indian unity the Congress confessed that a 'satisfactory solution of the communal problem can come only through the good-will and cooperation of the principal communities concerned.'[1] In effect, this attitude meant nothing, especially when the Congress was not prepared to take any positive steps to seek a solution acceptable to the communities concerned.

It may be recalled that in February 1935 Jinnah, actuated by an earnest desire to bring about an understanding between the League and the Congress with a view to accelerating political and constitutional progress, entered into negotiations with the Congress President, Rajendra Prasad in his personal capacity. Jinnah put forward the Muslim point of view that the Communal Award must be accepted till the communities concerned agreed upon a substitute; secondly, the Provincial part of the Constitution should be worked for what it was worth, and they should continue their efforts to achieve a constitution to the full satisfaction of the people. He made it clear that if Rajendra Prasad and other Hindu leaders could put forward a formula on the basis of joint electorate

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1 Coupland R. : *op. cit.*, 1945, p. 152.

which would better safeguard Muslim interests, he was prepared to consider it; further, if such formula were supported by the Hindus and the Sikhs he would place it before the All-India Muslim League without delay. But before such a formula could be devised the Hindu Congress leaders of Bengal and the Panjab opposed the move and the Jinnah-Prasad talks proved infructuous.

The Congress with its vast organization and the financial backing provided by Big Business conducted its election campaign on an emotional plane—an appeal to anti-British sentiment, and to 'vote for Gandhi' who had by this time become somewhat of a deity in Hindu eyes. Of the 1585 seats in all the Provincial Assemblies, the Congress won 711 seats i.e. 45% of the total. In five provinces—Madras, the U. P., the C.P., Bihar and Orissa it obtained clear overall majorities. In Bombay it won nearly half the seats but could rely on some pro-Congress groups to give it a majority. In Assam it was the single biggest group with 35 seats out of 108. But its failure to win any appreciable number of Muslim seats was as striking as its success in Hindu constituencies. Of the 482 Muslim seats the Congress contested 58 and won only 26 i.e 5.4% and most of these seats were in North-West Frontier Province where the Red Shirts had made common cause with the Congress. In the Muslim majority provinces of Bengal, the Panjab and Sind, the Congress won 60 out of 250, 18 out of 175 and 8 out of 60 seats respectively, most of them being Hindu seats.

After the results of the elections were known in February 1937 the All-India Congress Committee adopted a resolution claiming that the Indian people in agreement with the Congress had rejected the Act of 1935 and desired to frame their own constitution by themselves by means of a Constituent Assembly. This was, indeed, a tall claim, for only about 55% of the electorate had gone to the polls and the Congress had won no more than 45% of the total number of seats. The Committee, nevertheless, demanded the withdrawal of the new constitution and directed the Congress members of the Legislatures to follow the policy of 'combating the Act'—a policy which, in the words of the Committee, 'must inevitably lead to deadlocks with the British Government and bring out still further the inherent antagonism beween British imperialism and Indian nationalism.'[1] On the crucial question of acceptance of office the Committee decided by a majority that Congress Ministries might be formed provided they received assurances that the Governors would not use their special powers against Ministers 'in regard to their constitutional activities.' The decision, in keeping with the general Congress attitude, was disingenuous and tortuous. It was designed to coerce the Governors into surrendering their constitutional obligations, especially in regard to the safeguarding of the interests of the minorities, so that a totalitarian Hindu rule might be established in the majority provinces and eventually in the whole of India.

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1 **Coupland**: *op. cit.*, **p. 155.**

When the Act came into force on April, 1937 the Governors of the Provinces in which the Congress had won majorities were confronted with the demand to give an undertaking in terms of the Congress resolution. This the Governors could not possibly do, whereupon the Congress leaders declined the invitation to form Ministries. The Governors then turned to leaders of other minority parties to form interim Ministries. The Muslim League parties in the Assemblies, however, under instructions from Jinnah kept away from the interim Ministries, for they were keen to work in cooperation with the Congress parties for the general good. It was a gesture which the Congress ought to have appreciated but it did not. The Congress had not been so sure of capturing big majorities in the Assemblies, and it had no chance whatever so far as Muslim constituencies were concerned. A sort of unofficial understanding existed between the League and the Congress candidates to lend moral support to one another. In his election speeches Jinnah expressed sentiments of good-will towards the Congress and emphasised the need for friendly cooperation between the League and the Congress. For instance, in one of his speeches he said, "Ours is not a hostile movement. Ours is a movement which carries the olive branch to every sister community. We are willing to cooperate, we are willing to coalesce with any group or groups, provided their ideals, their objects are approximately the same."[1]

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1 Sayeed, K. B., *Pakistan: Formative Phase*, Karachi, 1960, p. 83.

There was a sudden change in the Congress attitude as soon as the results of the elections were known. The unexpected success at the polls had an intoxicating effect on the Congress leaders. The Congress President, Subhas Chandra Bose, who was at that time in Vienna for medical treatment declared that Party dictatorship should be the slogan of the Congress and the idea of cooperation and coalition with other parties must be given up. Nehru went a step further and, in an offensive tone, declared at Calcutta that there were only two parties in the country—the Congress and the Government—and others had to line up. This bellicose utterance which betrayed a totalitarian mentality naturally elicited a reply from Jinnah who asserted that, "I refuse to line up. There is a third party in the country and that is the Muslims. We are not going to be dictated to by anybody."[1] Instead of welcoming the Muslim League's offer of cooperation Nehru began to talk of direct contact with the Muslim masses. Addressing a convention of newly elected Congress members of Provincial Assemblies on 19 March 1937 he said, "This talk of rights is sheer nonsense. For a long time we have been under the delusion that problems can be solved by reaching a settlement or understanding with communalist leaders. We neglected the masses. This approach was wrong and this policy useless. We will never return to this policy in future. It is surprising that there are still some people who consider the Muslims to be a separate group and are dreaming of reaching a settle-

1 Sayeed : *op cit.*, p. 85.

ment with the Hindus. This mode of thinking might have existed in the mediaeval ages but today nobody cares for it."[1] Within a few months of this utterance Nehru had to approach the Muslim League for negotiations.

There was a long public controversy on the question whether or not the kind of assurances demanded by the Congress could be given by the Governors. As a matter of fact there was a sneaking keenness on the part of the Viceroy and the Governors to rope in the Congress. The position is vividly described by Jinnah in an article contributed by him to the British Journal, *Time and Tide*, in January 1940: "Rushing to Wardha for guidance, the Working Committee took stock. What was the position? In five provinces they had been defeated and while they held a complete majority in six, the oppositions, weak in numbers though they were, were led by the small but solid blocks of the Muslim League members. This situation had two very unsatisfactory aspects. First, it brought out the completely Hindu composition of the Congress, and, secondly, it would be difficult to ignore and over-ride Muslim-led oppositions as long as Governors of provinces were in possession of special powers granted to safeguard minority interests. Realising at once that such circumstances would considerably hinder their plans the Congress played its trump card. It refused to accept office. To the consternation of the Muslims and other minorities the Viceroy and Governors

1 Batalvi, Ashiq Husain, *Iqbāl ke Ā͟khri Do Sāl*, Karachi, 1961, p. 381.

became supplicants. What would the Congress have them do ? What assurances did the Congress need ? The answer was ready. Give us the undertaking that you will not exercise your special powers and we will accept office. Hastily the constitutional guardians of minority and other rights jettisoned their trust and, amidst much mutual appreciation of each other's 'statesmanship', the Congress and the British Government came into political alliance".[1]

The alliance was termed 'Gentlemen's Agreement' by Gandhi. It resulted from a long statement couched in conciliatory language which the Viceroy, Linlithgow, issued on 22 June 1937. He pointed out that the safeguards were severely restricted in scope and were not likely to cause an open breach between a Governor and his Ministers except on a major issue and appealed to the Indian people to count on him 'to strive untiringly for the full and final establishment in India of the principles of parliamentary government'. The statement did not surrender any constitutional ground but it was pounced upon by the Congress as a convenient handle for getting over the difficulty of their own making. The Congress Working Committee promptly permitted the Congress parties in the Provincial Assemblies to accept office. Commenting on this decision Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, a prominent member of the U. P. Congress Committee, remarked, "we should frankly admit our defeat. British diplomacy has completely triumphed over us. Government need have no fear

1 *The War*: (Published by the All-India Muslim League, Delhi, 1940), p. 56.

of the Congress now, because the Congress which wanted to create a revolutionary mentality among the masses has now become a friend of the British Government''.[1] Strangely enough, however, Kidwai himself joined the U.P. Congress Ministry).

The Congress Ministries were sworn in in six provinces—U. P., Bihar, Orissa, C. P., Bombay and Madras. So far it was plain sailing. But if purely Hindu Governments were formed the Congress would not be able to flaunt its 'nationalist' character. In three of the six provinces not a single Muslim had been returned on the Congress ticket and not more than one or two in others. The Congress leaders thought there would be at least one amongst the Muslim members who would be unable to resist the bait of a ministership. They would offer the ministership to any one who deserted his party and signed the Congress pledge. The question was whether the Governors would permit such a manoeuvre. The Instrument of Instructions which they were sworn to obey clearly laid down : "In making appointments to his Council of Ministers our Governor shall use his best endeavour to select his Ministers in the following manner, that is to say, in consultation with the person who in his judgement is likely to command a stable majority in the legislature to appoint those persons (including so far as practicable members of important minority communities) who will best be in a position collectively to command the confidence of the legislature.

1 Zuberi, Mohammad Amin : *Siyāsat-i-Milli*, Agra, 1941, p. 315.

But in so acting he shall bear constantly in mind the need of fostering a sense of joint responsibility among his Ministers''.[1] The spirit underlying the terms of the Instrument of Instructions was clear. It meant that the Governor should endeavour to secure to important minorities a Minister or Ministers who commanded their confidence. There was practically no difference in the programmes embodied in the manifestoes of the Congress and the Muslim League parties in the legislatures. It could not therefore be contended that it was not 'practicable' for a Muslim League member to be appointed a Minister.

The Congress hit upon another device to circumvent this requirement of the Instrument of Instructions. This is exposed by Jinnah in the same article as follows : "What about the last line? 'But in so acting he shall bear constantly in mind the need for fostering a sense of joint responsibility among his Ministers'. This fortunately could be turned to suit their purpose if the Governor was prepared to allow this second part, advisory and subsidiary to the main instruction, to override the first. They had but to claim that joint responsibility was impossible unless the Muslim Minister was prepared to abide by the decisions of the Working Committee and their point was won. Meekly the Governors acquiesced and in order to allow the Congress to deceive the public by making it appear that it was 'national' and looking after the interests of the minorities by including a 'representative' of them in the Council of Ministers, accepted

1 *The War : op. cit.*, p. 60.

as Muslim Ministers individuals who by no stretch of imagination could be regarded as 'representatives' of the Muslim community and who, by signing the Congress pledge, were responsible to the Working Committee alone".[1]

The meek and malleable attitude of the Governors served to increase Congress militancy and aggressiveness towards the Muslims and other minorities. It conducted its war against the Muslim League on several fronts, one of which was an insidious attempt to win over individual Muslim Leaguers by holding out allurements of office and thus demoralise and disrupt the League ranks. In C. P., Bihar, Bombay and Madras the Congress enticed a stray Muslim Leaguer or independent Muslim member to sign the Congress pledge in exchange for a Ministership. In the United Provinces a special effort was made to create a situation designed to bring about the merger of the Muslim League party in the Congress party, because it was thought that such a consummation would deal a serious blow to the existence of the Muslim League as an All-India organization. Instead of following the straight and honourable course of forming a coalition with the Muslim League party and including its representatives in the Cabinet the Congress leaders proceeded to wean away individual League members by methods of political bribery and corruption. There would have been no difficulty in forming a coalition, for the social and economic programmes of the two parties were similar. The

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1 *The War: op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.

British historian, Reginald Coupland, considers it not only feasible but very desirable that the Congress should have enlisted the League's cooperation. Says he, "Meantime the Muslim League also had issued a manifesto, the work of a Parliamentary Board which the League meeting had instructed Mr. Jinnah to establish. To all appearance the social policy it advocated was much the same as the Congress policy...............And there was nothing else in the League's programme to obstruct a practical entente. Might not the cooperation established at the Centre be extended to the Provincial field ? Might not the Congress-League coalition Ministries be established in most of the Provinces ? Would not that be the greatest possible step towards Indian unity and, therefore, towards Indian freedom ? Whatever its precise implications, the League manifesto was clearly an offer of cooperation, and, as will be manifest later on, the subsequent course of Hindu-Muslim relations and of the whole constitutional history would have been different if the Congress leaders had accepted the offer" ?[1]

Abul Kalam Azad in his book '*India Wins Freedom*' gives an account of his negotiations with the leader of the Muslim League Party in the U. P. Legislative Assembly which creates the impression as if no question of policy or principle were involved, and it was only a question of accommodating one or two Muslim Leaguers in the Cabinet. First of all,

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1 Coupland, R. : *Report on the Indian Constitutional Problem*. Part II, pp. 13-15.

the way he conducted the negotiations showed that his real motive was not to bring about any friendly understanding and cooperation between the Congress and the League but to put an end to the existence of the League as a political party at least in U. P. and cut the ground from under the feet of its President, Jinnah. For various reasons the League in U.P. held a pivotal position and Azad thought that if the U. P. League could be merged in the Congress, Jinnah's efforts to build up the League as an all-India party capable of fighting for Muslim cause would be seriously hampered if not altogether defeated. The Congress wanted to include two Muslims in the U. P. Ministry to give it the semblance of a 'national' cabinet. But it was faced with a difficulty. No Muslim had been elected to the U. P. Assembly on the Congress ticket. Before the Assembly could be called to meet for its first session a Muslim League member, Thakur Asghar Ali Khan, elected from Bahraich district, died. It was a 'safe' seat for the Muslim League. It was generally expected that the U. P. Muslim League Parliamentary Board would put up a candidate in the by-election. The League President, Jinnah had declared in a statement: "We have decided to contest the seat which was won by the Muslim League at Bahraich, as the member who won the seat, I sorrowfully have to say, is no more with us. So we have to capture this seat again. The Congress, I believe, is going to contest this seat. It will be a great mistake on the part of the Congress to do so. There is really no substantial difference

now at any rate between the Congress and the League as the plan of wrecking the constitution has disappeared from the Congress programme. I have often said that I am trying to see that Muslims should whole-heartedly and sincerely adhere to the policy and programme of the All-India Muslim League, which is both national and patriotic, and we shall always be glad to cooperate with the Congress in their constructive programme. It is no use encouraging individual Muslims to come into the fold of the Congress for the sake of a prize".[1]

Jinnah's statement was unambiguous, but it is regrettable that his advice was not followed and a 'Muslim League' seat was lost to the Congress. No League candidate was put up and a Congress leader, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, was allowed to be elected unopposed, In his book '*India Wins Freedom*'—*the other side*[2] Abdul Waheed Khan testifies that "he (Kidwai) too had won the seat in a by-election through the support of Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman".

Having captured one Muslim seat by a method which could not be described as straight, the Congress, through Abul Kalam Azad approached the leader of the U. P. Muslim League party, Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman, over the head of the President of the All-India Muslim League, knowing that the League at the time was not a well-knit, strong organization.

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1 Saiyid, M. H. : *Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a Political Study*, Lahore, 1953, pp. 350-351.

2 (Published by Pakistan Educational Publishers, Karachi, 1961), p. 88.

The parleys between Abul Kalam Azad and Khaliquzzaman were conducted in a manner which created the impression that the intention was to seduce Muslim Leaguers by offering baits of office. Actually one Muslim League member, Hafiz Mohammed Ibrahim, was enticed away, and appointed a Minister as a reward for betraying the League. A few others were weaned away, and appointed Parliamentary Secretaries. The developments were causing much perturbation in Muslim League circles as is evident from the following statement of Jinnah :

"I understand there is a move to invite to the meeting of members of the Congress to be held on May 2 and May 3, some Muslim members who have been elected to the United Provinces Legislative Assembly on the Muslim League ticket and also a conference is going to be convened at Allahabad. I am entirely in the dark as to what the object of this move is. But I want to make it clear that it will be useless for any individual or individuals to effectively carry the Muslims behind them if any settlement is arrived at with a particular group or even for the matter of that the whole province.

"I say it is a pity that these round-about efforts are made. The only object of it can be to create some differences between the Muslims. It is no use dealing with those men who are in and out of the Congress and the Muslim League, at one time with one and at another time with the other, as it suits them. I am sure that the Muslims of the United Provinces will not betray the Muslims of India and

therefore any effort to settle by individuals which may be advantageous to them for the time being will not carry us anywhere.

"I have been promised by Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman, leader of the Muslim League Party in U. P. Legislature, that he will let me know what the situation is in the United Provinces. I have sent him reminders and I am waiting to hear from him for the last three weeks. I cannot understand the mystery of his silence. I only trust that he will not enter into any commitment which may be repudiated not only by the Muslims of his province but the Muslims of India.

"The method of dealing with individuals and groups can only result in isolating and dividing the Muslim group by group or province by province and in destroying the united front".[1]

Azad and Nehru formulated terms and conditions for including Muslim League members in the U. P. Cabinet which were as follows :

1. The Muslim League group in the United Provinces Legislature shall cease to function as a separate group.

2. The existing members of the Muslim League party in the U. P. Assembly shall become part of the Congress party and will fully share membership of the Party. They will likewise be subject to control and discipline of the Congress Party in an equal measure with other members, and the decision of the Congress

1 *Times of India*, dated 26 April, 1937.

Party as regards work in the Legislature and general behaviour of its members shall be binding on them. All matters shall be decided by a majority vote of the Party, each individual member having one vote.

3. The policy laid down by the Congress Working Committee for their members in the legislatures along with the instructions issued by the competent Congress bodies pertaining to their work in such legislatures shall be faithfully carried out by all members of the Congress Party including these members.

4. The Muslim League Parliamentary Board in the U. P. will be dissolved and no candidate will thereafter be set up by the said Board at any by-election. All members of the Party shall actively support any candidate that may be nominated by the Congress to fill up a vacancy occurring hereafter.

5. All members of the Congress Party shall abide by the rules of the Congress Party and offer their full cooperation with a view to promoting the interest and prestige of the Congress.

6. In the event of the Congress Party deciding on resignation from the Ministry or the legislature the members of the afore-mentioned group shall be bound by that decision.

These terms were conveyed to Chaudhri Khaliq-uzzaman by Maulana Azad with a note which stated, "It was hoped that if these terms were agreed to and the Muslim League group of members joined the Congress party as full members, that group would

cease to exist as a separate group. In the formation of the Provincial Cabinet it was considered proper that they should have representatives".[1] It is, indeed, amazing as to how the Congress leaders had the effrontery to put forward such terms and conditions which no self-respecting party could ever entertain. It was known that Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, President of the U. P. Provincial Muslim League, who was not a party to these negotiations, was strongly opposed to these terms and conditions. Muslim public opinion by this time had become vocal and assertive, and the note of warning sounded by Jinnah averted the danger of surrender on the part of the U. P. Muslim League Party. The Azad-Khaliquzzaman parleys fell through.

Azad's own version of the causes of the breakdown of the negotiations may be noted, as it throws light on the real motives of the Congress. He says : "After some days I returned to Allahabad and found to my great regret that Jawaharlal had written to Choudhari Khaliquzzaman and Nawab Ismail Khan that only one of them could be taken into the Ministry. He had said that the Muslim League party could decide who should be included but in the light of what I have said above neither was in a position to come in alone[2]. They, therefore, expressed their regrets and said they were unable to accept Jawaharlal's offer. This was a most unfortunate development. If the

1 Coupland R. : *op. cit.*, p. 294.

2 i. *e.* the local position was such that neither of them could enter the Government alone).

U.P. League's offer of cooperation had been accepted the Muslim League party would, for all practical purposes, have merged in the Congress. Jawaharlal's action gave the Muslim League in U. P. a new lease of life. All students of Indian politics know that it was from the U. P. that the League was reorganized. Mr. Jinnah took full advantage of the situation and started an offensive which ultimately led to Pakistan".[1] So the real intent and purpose was not to accommodate but kill the Muslim League. Had it not been for Jinnah's firm stand the Muslim League at least in the United Provinces would, in all likelihood, have suffered a serious set-back.

The Congress High Command adopted a similar attitude towards the Muslim League in Bombay. According to the testimony of Kanji Dwarkadas, a prominent Hindu leader of Bombay : "Kher, the Chief Minister-designate, before forming the Ministry, saw Jinnah. He requested Jinnah to give him two members of his Muslim League to join in the Ministry. Jinnah readily agreed and offered his and the Muslim League's fullest co-operation to the Congress Ministry. But what happened ? Kher told me the whole story and later Jinnah confirmed it. The High Command, Sardar Patel, in particular, took Kher to task for having approached Jinnah. The High Command wanted no truck with Jinnah. So Kher's request for two Muslim Leaguers in the Ministry was turned into a demand by the Congress that the Muslim Leaguers must resign from the

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1 Azad, Abul Kalam : *India Wins Freedom*, Calcutta, 1959, p. 161.

Muslim League and join the Congress and then only would they be taken as Ministers. This was a humiliating condition for the Muslim League to accept. Jinnah rightly resented it. He, therefore, rejected the Congress suggestion. He wanted to co-operate with the Congress Ministry but not by liquidating and sabotaging his own party".[1]

The narrowness of outlook displayed by the Congress leadership is criticised even by a distinguished Hindu scholar, Beni Prasad, who writes : "Orthodox parliamentarism led the Congress leaders to forget that the one-party theory, even if true of political agitation, was not, in the absence of an accomplished revolution, applicable to Ministerial office. The change from extra-constitutional action to governmental responsibility to which the Congress assented in 1937 was a change of scale and methods of the profoundest significance and called for a fresh evaluation and a rearrangement of political forces. The country was passing through a crisis, and crises have usually been surmounted even in England through coalitions, for instance in 1915, 1931 and 1940".[2] Criticising orthodox parliamentarism he says further, "The majority 'principle' is at bottom not an ethical maxim but a rule of expediency, and has always to be so interpreted as to command minority affirmation. Orthodox parliamentarism, however, carried the day and excluded the Muslim League as an organization from a share in power".[3]

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1 Dwarkadas Kanji : *India's Fight for Freedom*, Bombay, 1966, pp. 466-467.

2 Prasad, Beni : *Hindn-Muslim Question*, pp. 59-60.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

The comments of the British historian, Reginald Coupland, are equally pertinent; "In the first action taken by the Congress leaders under the new constitution, in their first move in the field of parliamentary politics there was nothing of that spirit of compromise without which parliamentary government cannot be expected to work successfully or long. The logic of majority rule was to be strictly enforced. The Congress would form no coalition with a minority party. If League politicians wanted a share in Government they must join the Congress and submit to the control of the Congress bodies in all of which the Muslim members would be in a minority. If this ultimatum were accepted it was frankly hoped, and with good reason, that the League would cease to exist".[1]

The Congress had two sets of principles---one for provinces where it wielded absolute majorities and the other for provinces where it did not command over-all majorities. In N. W. F. P. and Assam, non-Congress coalition Ministries, headed by Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum Khan and Sir Mohammad Saadullah respectively, had been formed, and they fuuctioned for some time. But the Congress would not tolerate them. It resorted to every machination and manoeuvre to bring down these Ministries. Contrary to its declared principle of forming no coalitions, the Congress allowed its groups in the provincial Assemblies of N. W. F. P. and Assam to coalesce with other (non-League) groups and set up Coalition Ministries.

1 Coupland, R.: *op. cit.*, p. 112.

This was in pursuance of its design to establish its complete hegemony over the entire country in order to prove its claim to be the successor to the British Raj. The easy victories the Congress had achieved naturally had an intoxicating effect on the minds of the Congress leaders. They proceeded to establish a party dictatorship, as Subhas Chandra Bose had earlier demanded. The position was well described by Jinnah as follows : "The Working Committee arrogated to itself the position of a parallel central government to whom the provincial governments were responsible. Regional dictators were appointed and the Ministers were entirely subject to their orders generally, and no provincial legislation could be enacted without their approval. They then proceeded to stifle even the little opposition that existed. Having dealt with the British they now dealt with the Muslims".[1]

With its vast organizational strength, finances, backing of the press and the advantages accruing from Ministerial authority, the Congress launched upon a campaign of Muslim mass contact. A special department of Muslim Mass Contact was set up in the office of the All-India Congress Committee with young Muslim leftists like K. M. Ashraf and Z. A. Ahmad as its members. Flushed with the newly acquired power, the Congress thought it could ride rough-shod over the Muslim League and cow down the Muslims into submission. The Congress idea of Muslim mass contact was not to win their support by

1 *The War*: *op. cit.*, p. 61.

genuine good-will and service but to overawe them by a show of Hindu strength and to make them feel that unless they surrendered and toed the Congress line they would face disaster and suffering. Even the ordinary Congress volunteers, leave alone the leaders, behaved as if Hindu Raj had been established. This feeling spread among the general Hindu public, as Sir Harry Haig who was Governor of U. P. at that time testifies : "The enthusiasm of the masses for the Congress Raj melted imperceptibly into ideas of Hindu Raj which were certainly prevalent throughout the province. These ideas were deeply resented by the Muslims who were invincibly determined not to be ruled by the Hindus".[1] E. W. R. Lumby in his book, *The Transfer of Power in India*, takes the same view : "Islam had maintained its separate identity in India for several hundred years. But during these centuries the Muslims had been at first victorious invaders and later fellow-subjects with the Hindus of the British. Now at last the Hindus had recovered something of their ancient power, and automatically they began to mould everything to their own way of life, so that it seemed to Muslims that unless the process was checked the whole structure of their own religion and culture would be undermined".[2]

The local Congress Committees in the Congress-governed provinces practically functioned as a parallel government in the districts. This was encouraged by the Congress Ministries themselves as is borne out

1 Sayeed : *op. cit.*, p. 87.
2 p 23.

by the circular letter sent by the Chief Secretary of the U.P. Government to all district magistrates. The letter referred to frequent reports about the 'embarrassing attitude' adopted by Congress supporters towards the district authorities and the complaints of the Congress workers against their behaviour, especially of the lower grades of Government officials. It also emphasised the importance of 'establishment of relations of mutual confidence between the district authorities and the leaders of the Congress organization.'[1] That such a procedure was contrary to all sound democratic principles and traditions involving grave injustice to non-Congress sections of the population did not seem to matter to the Congress at all.

The situation prevailing in the Congress-governed provinces as a result of the iniquitous policies followed by the Congress Ministries is vividly described by the British historian, Sir Reginald Coupland, who studied it at first-hand : "It was not only the Working Committee's control of the Congress Ministries that showed that a 'Congress Raj' had been established in their provinces. It was betrayed by the conduct and bearing of Congressmen, both in the performance of public duties and as individuals, at the outset of the regime. *Bande Matram* was sung to open proceedings in the provincial Legislatures. The tri-colour was hoisted over local administrative buildings. And not unnaturally, all the subordinate branches of the 'parallel' Government

1 Sayeed. *op. cit.*, p. 91.

now felt themselves authorised to govern. Congress Committees issued orders. In some districts Congress police stations were opened and Congress police began to investigate crime . . . . The U.P. Provincial Congress Committee set up a 'Military Department' and declared its intention of raising a Provincial force 500,000 strong to be brigaded with other Provincial forces in a great 'National Army'. An officers' training camp was started and bodies of men began drill and march, in uniforms, with lathis for arms and their flag flying. A less sinister phenomenon but one which made a deep impression on the minorities was the demeanour of the rank and file of Congressmen, especially the younger ones, on the morrow of their electoral victory. Many of them behaved as if they were a ruling caste, as if they owned the country".[1] A former editor of 'Statesman' of Calcutta, Ian Stephens, expresses the same view of the working of the Congress Ministries : "Provincial Ministers in the U.P. and elsewhere conducted their daily business in an atmosphere of Ram Raj repugnant to non-Hindus. And all sorts of petty pressures and harassments aimed against Muslims began to be alleged. School children were instructed to worship Gandhi's portrait with folded hands in the Hindu manner, and to sing *Bande Matram*---a nationalist ditty taken from Bankim Chatterji's obnoxious novel. Beef-eating was actively discouraged, also the Urdu language and script ; the

1 *Op. cit.*, pp. 174-175.

best appointments always went to Hindus, the police sided with Hindus during riots".[1]

The Congress Governments were fast developing into a totalitarian regime. This is recognised by Sir Reginald Coupland ; "All the people of the Congress provinces who were not Congressmen---and they numbered many millions---had been quick to observe the Congress disclosure of what can only be called a totalitarian mentality . . . . . . The essence of tota-titorianism is not in its methods but in its principles, and its principle is simply one-party government or the identification of the Party with the State. When the Congress Governments took office, the identification did in fact come about. It was manifest not only in the symbolism ; the flag and the 'national anthem'---not only in the pretentions of committees or individual members of the party to be part of the Government machine, but also in the Government's allegiance to the Congress Centre'."[2] The checks on a party dictatorship which are a familiar feature of democracy did not exist in the Congress-governed provinces. In democratic States the uncertain issue of the next election leads the ruling party to conciliate hostile elements and win over neutral sections of public opinion. The need for compromise with minority views is felt and the ruling party attempts to conduct government by discussion rather than sheer weight of a majority. To the Congress, however, the minority parties did not matter. It did not

1 Ian Stephens : *Pakistan*, London, 1963, p. 77.
2 P. 176.

consult them and their suggestions, however reasonable, were rejected out of hand. The minority parties were ridiculed as 'reactionary' and the grievances voiced by them, however genuine, were scoffed at. As Sir Reginald Coupland says : "It was impossible, in fact, to evade the truth that the idea of a Congress Raj had materialised. The Congress had 'taken delivery' in most of the provinces. It intended soon, no doubt, to take it at the Centre".[1]

The coming into power of Congress Ministries signalised an alarming increase in the number of Hindu-Muslim riots and accentuation of bitter feelings between Muslims and Hindus in the Congress-governed provinces. The riots were not the manifestation of mere religious differences, for such differences had always been there and they existed in non-Congress provinces also. It was the oppressive and discriminating policy and the hostile attitude of Congress Governments that led to frequent riots. The outward causes of Muslim-Hindu conflicts were the playing of music before mosques, the hoisting of the tri-colour flag of the Congress on public buildings, the singing of *Bande Matram* song and the forcible prevention of cow-killing. Music was deliberately played before the mosques at the time of prayers to injure Muslim religious sentiment. The tri-colour flag of the Congress party was forcibly hoisted on public buildings and schools and colleges, though the Muslims refused to accept it as the national flag. The *Bande Matram* song was insisted

1 P. 176.

upon as the national song, though it was most offensive to Muslim sentiments being anti-Muslim in its purport and idolatrous in its inspiration. In many schools Muslim children were forced to sing *Bande Matram*, to worship Gandhi's portrait and to dress and salute in the Hindu style. The policy of the Congress Governments was inspired by the ambition of the Hindu majority to dominate and rule the Muslim minority which was not willing to recognise the Hindus as its superiors. The Muslims resented injustice and discriminatory treatment. They refused to be bullied into the position of an under-study of the Hindus and this led to rioting. As Sir Reginald Coupland remarks : "The worst and most dangerous cause of disorder was, as it had always been, communal strife. The barometer of rioting and fighting, which had stood so steady for some years past, began to fall again. When the Congress Ministries resigned in the autumn of 1939, there had been 57 communal outbreaks in their provinces and more than 1,700 casualties of which over 130 had been fatal[1]...... By the end of 1939 it was widely believed that, if the Congress Governments had lasted much longer, communal fighting would have broken out on an unprecedented scale".[2] In certain parts of the country unspeakable atrocities were perpetrated on poor and defenceless Muslims but the Congress Governments of the localities took

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1 It may be stated that these are official figures ; the actual number of casualties was much larger.

2 *Op. cit.*, pp. 158, 187.

no steps to bring the offenders to book; they rather resorted to firing upon and arrests of Muslims.

In remote villages Muslims lived in constant dread of their lives and honour. They were even subjected to forcible conversion to Hinduism. They were attacked by mobs if they slaughtered cows even as a religious rite or even if they called the Faithful to prayers.

Some times the mosques were desecrated. Civil liberties for which Congressmen used to agitate before coming into office were denied to the Muslims. Their meetings were spied upon; their freedom to hold meetings, to take out processions or perform their religious rites was often circumscribed by promulgation of orders under Section 144 Cr. P.C. The exercise of civil and religious rights by Muslims was often interfered with. The morale and prestige of district officials was impaired, for they were directed to act in consultation with local Congressmen. The officials, therefore, could not act with independence and impartiality. It was not unusual that a district official who happened to incur the displeasure of a local Congress 'boss' received telephonic orders of transfer. There were cases of Congressmen trying to influence the decisions of the law-courts and of Congress Ministries over-riding the decisions of the law-courts.

A few cases showing the high-handedness of Congress Governments may here be briefly cited. In a small village called Chandur Biswa with a tiny Muslim population in the Central Provinces there lived a man Jagdeo who was notorious

for his anti-Muslim activities and writings offensive to Muslim sentiments. He took out a procession playing music and shouting anti-Muslim slogans before a mosque at the time of prayer. The Muslim worshippers protested and in the melee that followed many Muslims and Hindus were injured, Jagdeo succumbing to his injuries a few hours later. The Premier of C. P., Shukla, visited the village and made an irresponsible speech charging the Muslims with conspiracy. Under his orders the entire adult Muslim male population totalling 157 persons was arrested for the alleged murder of one Hindu. In the hot weather they were locked up in a small room. The Sessions Judge, Clarke, referring to this lock-up, remarked, "This is more suggestive of the conditions in Nazi Germany at the present time than of any enlightened portion of the British Empire".[1] On a representation to the D. I. G. of Police 114 persons were released and 43 put up for trial. The sorry plight of these Muslims can be gauged from the fact that no evidence could be adduced in support of defence. Six of them were awarded capital punishment and 24 were sentenced to transportation for life. It was a shocking judgement. In response to the C.P. Muslims' request, Jinnah deputed an eminent Bombay lawyer, Somjee, to plead their appeal in the High Court.

The remarks made by the Chief Justice Sir Gilbert Stone and Justice Vivian Bose about the

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1 *It Shall Never Happen Again*, published by All-India Muslim League, Delhi, 1946, p. 261.

prosecution story, prosecution witnesses and the identification parade are noteworthy. The Chief Justice observed (1) "This is a distressing case. The epithet is justified when we see in this case, where 43 men are standing their trial on a capital charge, witness after witness whose evidence is false, improved or tutored, going into the box. (2) It is also a case in which, though this court is not concerned with politics, it is relevant and necessary to mention certain facts which at first sight appear to give a political tinge. (3) In the course of the resulting debate on an adjournment motion a number of members thought fit to speak as though it was known with precision what crime had been committed. And so far as one member was concerned indications were given as to who had committed the crime of murder. In the course of that debate the Premier, Mr. Shukla, himself did not hesitate to use the word 'murder' and to indicate that this was a case of a ruthlessly carried out plan. I mention this only for two purposes (i) to explain the very extra-ordinary occurrences which followed shortly thereafter and the difficulties of the police and prosecution, and (ii) to deprecate such observations which have in this case resulted, in my opinion, in the evidence being so improved, concocted and tutored as to result in its being absolutely worthless, with the *result that instead of those guilty of crime being brought to conviction no one is convicted*."[1] Justice Vivian Bose said : (i) "It

1 *It Shall Never Happen Again*: op. cit., pp. 262, 263.

is only necessary to quote these figures to show the tragic farce into which these proceedings had degenerated. And yet it was on the strength of these open identifications that 145 men and boys were arrested and locked up for the night in a 30'×20' room. (2) This is the comic opera story we are asked to believe by the prosecution"[1] During the time these men were in jail their women and children had to undergo terrible sufferings for they were subjected to economic boycott by the Hindus. Their sufferings were somewhat mitigated when Muslims from neighbouring villages came to their rescue. This case constituted a glaring example of tyranny and oppression on a helpless minority and of flagrant interference with the course of justice by a self-styled 'popular', 'national' Government.

Another case of Congress Government's highhandedness deserves to be mentioned since it is corroborated by no less a person than Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani who was all long associated with the Congress. Tanda, a town in Eastern U.P., was populated largely by Muslim weavers who were pro-Congress. The following extracts from a statement issued by the Maulana on the firing which took place in this town on 21 August 1938 speak for themselves : "In front of the Chowk mosque runs a lane along which no procession of Hindus had ever passed. On 21 August 1938 a procession of Hindus with music came towards the mosque and wanted to

1 ***It shall Never Happen Again*** **: p. 263.**

pass in front of it. Some Muslims stopped them and asked them to go back as it was against custom; Hindus insisted on passing and the crowd increased. In order that the processionists might not turn back some Hindu ring-leaders barricaded the road at the rear of the procession. Discussion continued for two hours after which the Tahsildar came. After hearing the dispute the Tahsildar said he would see the records whether there was any precedent: saying this he went away. The crowd did not attack the police nor did they indulge in any violence. After some time suddenly the S. D. O. and sub-inspector of police came to the scene. He asked the police to surround the crowd of Muslims and ordered firing without warning. Although the first shot dispersed the crowd 18 or 20 rounds were fired. Wherever a few Muslims were seen togethar they were fired upon. Afterwards there was indiscriminate lathi-charge. All Muslims who could be caught hold of were tied with ropes and assaulted with kicks and fists. Some of the officials of Fyzabad were among the assailants. The wounded were not attended to for a long time after firing. Some people were inside the mosque for prayers before the firing had begun and they had closed the door when they heard firing. The police bolted the door of the mosque from the outside; later the Muslims inside the mosque were brought out and mercilessly beaten. The arrested persons were taken to the police station, tied with ropes, again assaulted and packed into small rooms. When they were thirsty

and asked for water they were told to drink their urine. The S. D. O. ordered that no telegrams should be allowed to be sent out from Tanda and no passengers should be allowed to leave Tanda by train. The next morning trains left Tanda without any passengers.[1]" This is the testimony of a Muslim 'divine' whom the Congress counted among its loyal supporters and made use of at the time of elections !

A typical example of how barbarous outrages were perpetrated with impunity on helpless Muslims in Congress-governed provinces is provided by a heinous crime committed in a village, Tilkori, in Bihar. A Muslim villager had purchased some beef to entertain his friends on the occasion of the wedding of his daughter. Suddenly the Hindus accused him of having killed a calf belonging to a Hindu villager. In spite of the Muslim villager's protest and although the butcher testified that he had purchased the beef from him, the Hindus attacked him and his guests. The hands and feet of the Muslims were bound and tied to their necks. Then the Hindus brought a pig from the house of a Hindu outcaste and rubbed the beast's mouth against the mouths of the Muslims, saying, 'This is the revenge of your eating beef.' The Hindus entered the zenana, pulled away the clothes of the Muslim women, assaulted and dishonoured them. When these men were put up for trial the trying court did not believe the allegation about the rubbing of the pig's mouth. Instead the court made the prepos-

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1 ***It Shall Never Happen Again*** : pp. 65, 66.

terous suggestion that a compromise may be effected by paying a magnificent sum of Rs. 200 to the aggrieved Muslims ! The very idea of pecuniary compensation for such inhuman degradation and brutal treatment was revolting and intolerable. The 43 Hindus, accused in the case, were given shelter in the office of the Town Congress Committee which was the house of a Congress Parliamentary Secretary. A few of the accused were convicted. They appealed to the Sessions Judge who, however, upheld the sentences passed by the lower court but characterised them as 'astonishingly low'. The Government, however, did not appeal for enhancement of the sentences nor against the acquittal of the accused under the relevant sections of the law. This case shows that under Congress rule the law of civilization ceased to operate and the law of the jungle prevailed so far as the Muslims were concerned.

Two other cases of discrimination against Muslims and glaring interference with dispensation of justice may be noted. Yusuf Sharif who had betrayed the Muslim League after his election to the Central Provinces Legislative Assembly on the League ticket had been appointed Law Minister in the C. P. Congress Cabinet. Two Hindus and two Muslims who had been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment in a case of criminal assault on a young girl submitted a mercy petition to the Government. Considering the doubtful character of the girl and the sufferings already undergone by the accused, Sharif re-

duced their terms of imprisonment. This was a usual practice of Governments, Sharif had previously exercised the discretion in favour of Hindus in as many as 55 other cases, but the Hindus raised a storm of protest against his action in the case mentioned above. The Congress High Command appointed a retired High Court Judge, Sir Manmathanath Mukerji, to hold an enquiry. He reached the conclusion that Sharif did not overstep the bounds of authority, nor did he show any communalism or dishonesty, but considering the facts of the case, it could be said that he committed an error of judgement. Expression of this opinion was outside the terms of reference of the Inquiry Commission. In any case it was not a crime for which a Minister should be removed from office. However, under orders of the Congress High Command, Sharif had to resign.

An entirely different attitude was adopted when a Hindu was involved in a similar case. Mehta who had succeeded Sharif as Law Minister completely set at liberty a Hindu who had been sentenced to death by the Sessions Court for killing a Muslim girl by making her take poison and whose appeal had been rejected by the High Court. The Muslims strongly protested against this action. Even the Bar Association of the Nagpur High Court expressed abhorrence at this misuse of authority by the Minister. But the Congress High Command turned down all demands for inquiry.

The *modus operandi* of Congress Governments was as follows : the Muslims were provoked and persecuted ; if they resisted they were subjected to lathi charge, firing and arrests ; if they protested against injustice and high-handedness they were accused of fanning 'communalism' ; if they demanded their rights they were dubbed 'communalists' and 'reactionaries'. It is not possible to quote here hundreds of cases of tyranny and oppression practised on Muslims and the Congress Governments' failure to secure them justice. They were collected and published in the following documents: (1) *Pirpur Report* published by the All-India Muslim League, (2) *Sharif Report*, published by the Bihar Provincial Muslim League, (3) *Congress Raj in C. P.* by Hakim Asrar Ahmad, (4) *Muslim Sufferings under Congress Rule* by Fazlul Haq, (5) *It Shall Never Happen Again*, published by the All-India Muslim League.

The few cases cited above are only illustrative, but they are sufficient to prove three points--(1) the Congress on attaining partial power in a number of provinces showed no spirit of conciliation or compromise but used their power to establish Congress Raj which was just another name for Hindu Raj ; (2) the Congress Governments disregarded all accepted norms and traditions of democratic and responsible government in so far as treatment of minorities, especially the Muslims, was concerned ; (3) the Muslims were subjected to high-handedness and

oppression and could expect no justice from the Congress Governments. The remarks of tha British writer, E. W. R. Lumby, in this connection are pertinent : "The policy of the Congress Governments had the effect of intensifying Muslim fears. Just as the Congress party had already become penetrated with the ideas and methods of Gandhi, so now the same philosophy began to colour the policy and administration of the Governments which the Congress controlled. . . . No doubt there were a number of cases of greater or less importance where local Congress bosses or Congress-minded government officials acted unfairly or tactlessly emphasised those aspects of the policy of their party or their Government which were most likely to give offence to the Muslims, and the Congress educational policy certainly had a marked Hindu and Gandhian aspect."[1]

There were three other important matters—language, education and economic policy—in regard to which the Congress Governments attempted to deprive the Muslims of their legitimate rights. Before the Congress, under Gandhi's influence, had adopted a chauvinistic attitude, Urdu had generally been considered the *lingua franca* of India. It had come into existence as a result of the coming together of Muslim and Hindu peoples and the inter-action of different languages—Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Prakrit—in the days of Muslim rulers. The Hindus too had participated in the growth of Urdu language and

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1 P. 22.

literature. But ever since the beginning of Hindu revivalism Urdu was looked upon with hostility. Now attempts were made, with Gandhi's blessings, to force Sanskritised Hindi, which many Hindus themselves did not understand, on the entire subcontinent. The Congress leaders, especially Gandhi, however, ignored Muslim protests. The introduction of Hindi was a major item in the educational reforms which the Congress Governments sought to introduce. The Muslims naturally apprehended that the eclipse of Urdu would mean a serious blow to their separate national identity. Thus the question of protection of Urdu became part of the Muslim national problem.

Closely linked with the question of language was the educational problem. Before the advent of provincial autonomy the educational policy was in the hands of the British. Its impact on Muslim culture had been corrosive, yet the British maintained towards the end some balance between the positions of Hindus and Muslims. Now with the passing of a limited amount of power into the hands of the Hindu majority attempts were made to remould the educational system, particulariy in the primary stages, to undermine Islam and Muslim culture completely and to impose Hindu ideas on Muslims. A scheme of primary education, known as the Wardha scheme of education, was evolved under the guiding genius of Gandhi. The scheme had a definite political motive behind it, namely the obliteration of Muslim culture by subtle methods and the preparation of a generation

which would cease to be Muslim in thought, character and action.

The whole trend of the Wardha scheme was to impress on the mind of the Muslim child the inferiority and impotence of Muslim culture and the superiority of Hindu traditions and beliefs, Text-books were prepared with this end in view. Sir Reginald Coupland's remarks on the impact of the Wardha scheme on Muslims may be noted: "Ironically enough it was one of the best features of the Congress regime, its active interest in popular education, which excited most suspiction. It was not only Mr. Gandhi's notorious enthusiasm for the teaching of basic handicrafts ; Hindu schoolmasters in many schools required their pupils, whatever their faith, to accord ceremonial, almost a religious, reverence to the Mahatma. Some of the text-books too seemed to glorify Hinduism at the expense of Islam. Were not Muslim children being insensibly and insidiously indoctrinated with Hindu ways of thought'"[1] The Congress leaders believed that what the Congress as a political organization could not do openly, namely merge the Muslims into Hindu nationalism, the Wardha scheme of education would accomplish by slow but sure methods. This was but another instance of the fundamental clash of national ideals between Hindus and Muslims.

Even in regard to economic questions the Congress Governments so devised and manipulated

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1 Coupland : p. 186.

measures as to hit the interest of the Muslims. The Muslims were generally subjected to trade boycott by the Hindus. They were largely excluded from the benefits of social welfare schemes. Even the so-called socialists discriminated against the Muslims in practice. The execution of beneficent schemes was in the hands of Hindu officials who saw to it that the Muslims did not get their due share in the benefits. Most departments and services of the Governments were almost entirely manned and officered by the Hindus. Of course, this was a legacy of pre-Reform days. But the position became worse with the assumption of office by the Congress. The demand of Muslims for adequate representation in services and even admission to technical and professional institutions was ignored on the specious plea of merit and efficiency. Muslims were gradually squeezed out of key positions. Muslim schools, *maktabs* and charitable institutions received no encouragement from Congress Governments. The policy, on the other hand, was to exterminate them gradually. Penderel Moon, who served as an I. C. S. Officer for over thirty years in India, throws light on the Hindu attitude towards the Muslims ; "They (Hindus) might say the Muslims were their brothers but would in fact treat them as less than step-brothers. A few leaders might be sincere in their intentions, but the ingrained exclusiveness of most of the high-caste Hindus was bound to assert itself, so that at most only a few hand-picked Muslims would be embraced

as brothers and the rest relegated to the position of out-castes.'"[1]

The Congress leaders, in spite of their professed solicitude for the peasants, had no scruples in opposing the Tenancy Bill of the Bengal Government, because most of the landlords in that province were Hindus and the peasants Muslims. But in the U. P. they insisted on an ill-conceived tenancy law to persecute the landlords, no matter whether it would do real good to the peasants or not. In the Panjab the Congress party, backed and aided by the Congress 'Centre', vehemently opposed such bills as Restitution of Mortgaged Lands Bill, Moneylenders Bill and went to the extent ef calling them 'black bills', although they were calculated to afford relief to the common people groaning under the heavy load of debts and to distribute the economic burdens between the urban commercial classes and the rural classes, because the money-grabbing usurers and the commercial middlemen were Hindus.

The Congress Governments did not move a finger to touch the money-lenders, the middlemen in various trades and the industrialists who were the real exploiters of the masses, for they were Hindus and financial backers of the Congress. While so much anxiety was displayed to promote the interests of the peasants, practically nothing was done to improve the lot of the labourers. The reason was obvious. Peasants were far larger in number and it was to their strength and support that the Congress owed its position ; the

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1 **Moon, Penderel :** ***Divide and Quit*****, London, p. 289.**

labourers were fewer in number and worked under Hindu capitalists. There were frequent labour strikes in the Congress-governed provinces. The Congress Ministries resorted to the same ruthless measures to crush these strikes as Congressmen had been wont to criticise before they came into power. Sir Reginald Coupland remarks, "Before the Congress Ministries came to an end there was little to distinguish their methods of repression from those employed in non-Congress provinces or indeed under the pre-1937 British regime."[1] It is clear that there was no uniformity of principle in the Congress policy which was only determined by considerations of Hindu domination.

In spite of the failure to get the Muslim League Parties liquidated in the provinces, especially the U. P., the Congress persisted in its efforts to win over the Muslim masses behind the back of the Muslim League. The first regular trial of strength came in a by-election in Jhansi-Bundelkhand constituency in U. P. By this time the Jamiat-al-Ulama leaders like Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani and Maulana Ahmad Saeed had deserted the Muslim League, as Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim, their favourite candidate, had been included in the Congress Ministry. The Congress entered the contest with many advantages. It was a well-organized party with unlimited funds, a large number of trained workers and volunteers and a powerful Press at its back. Now it also had at its disposal the whole official machinery which it used to

1 **Coupland** : *op. cit.*, p. 158.

influence the voters. The League, on the other hand, was yet in the initial stages of organization. Its only assets were a small band of devoted workers and the justice of its cause. Fighting against overwhelming odds the League won the seat by a large majority. The credit for this victory goes to that redoubtable champion of Muslim rights, the hero of many a political battle, Maulana Shaukat Ali, who fought against a whole army of Congress leaders from Nehru downwards and Jamiat-al-Ulama 'divines', almost single-handed. He saved the situation for Muslim India on a critical occasion, thus inspiring the Muslims with confidence and courage to stand up to the onslaught of Congress chauvinism.

Muslim India was stirred from one end of the subcontinent to the other as it had become conscious of the danger to its political existence. It was widely felt in Muslim circles that the time had come for the Muslim League to convert itself into a broad-based mass organization which could give a fitting reply to the challenge thrown by the Congress. Raja Amir Ahmad Khan of Mahmudabad succeeded in persuading Jinnah to select Lucknow as the venus of the annual session of the All-India Muslim League which was held in mid-October 1937. The young Raja worked with great energy and devotion to make the session a great success. History was made at Lucknow, for the session proved to be a turning point in the Muslim struggle for freedom.

The situation just before the Luckhow session of the League had compelled many Muslim leaders,

particularly in the Muslim majority provinces, to revise their attitude, although only a few months earlier they had refused to listen to Jinnah. In Bengal there was a Ministry composed of members elected on the Muslim League ticket and those who had been originally elected on the ticket of the Krishak Proja Party but had joined the Muslim League. It was headed by Fazlul Haq who had realised that no Provincial Ministry could last without the backing of an all-India party and had joined the League when he formed the Ministry. The Congress moved heaven and earth to dislodge the Ministry but failed in the attempt. In the Panjab there was no imminent threat to the Unionist Ministry. But here too the Congress had started its Muslim mass contact movement. As a shrewd observer the Panjab Premier, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, realized the potential danger to his Ministry and to the interests of the Muslims of the Panjab. He knew that the Unionist Ministry by itself could never withstand the rising tide of Congress totalitarianism, unless he secured the support of a Muslim organization functioning on an all-India plane. Ministries could not work in water-tight compartments of provinces, classes and groups. Sir Sikandar Hayat also could not be unaware of the trend of Muslim public opinion in his province. For all these reasons he too decided to throw in his lot with the Muslim League. Sir Sadullah, Premier of Assam, had already joined the League. The Congress Ministries by their iniquitous policies and discriminatory actions had created serious apprehensions and a

feeling of insecurity among the Muslims. They naturally looked to the Muslim majority provinces for moral support. The very sight of the three Muslim Premiers on the League platform heartened and afforded encouragement and succour to the Muslims suffering under Congress rule. But it is also true that by joining the League the Muslim Premiers too received valuable support from the Muslims of India which sustained their Ministries through several crises. Besides gaining support from the Muslim-majority provinces the session of the League took some momentous decisions which had a far-reaching effect on the course of India's political history. It took cognizance of several important questions agitating the Muslim mind and passed resolutions relating to Palestine, the Shahidganj mosque, Urdu, forcible imposition of *Bande Matram* as national anthem, the line system in Assam, reforms in Baluchistan and finally a progressive economic programme to be followed by the Leauge parties. The League effected radical changes in its constitution and creed. It resolved that its objective shall be "the establishment in India of Full Independence in the form of a federation of free, democratic states in which the rights and interests of the Muslims, and other minorities are adequately and effectively safeguarded in the constitution." This resolution was moved by the valiant fighter for freedom and independence, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, and was passed amid great enthusiasm which reflected the state of feeling in Muslim India. An analysis of the wording of the resolution

would show that it was an improvement on the Congress creed which merely envisaged attainment of independence. The League creed defined independence as a federation of free democratic states and further advocated safeguards for minorities. It was, therefore, more realistic, and provided a better answer to the political and constitutional problems of the country. The Lucknow session released powerful currents of energy and political consciousness among Muslims which were canalised into constructive channels by the League President, Jinnah, whom the Muslims now hailed as their Quaid-i-Azam.

Oblivious of the trend of events and all warnings, the Congress persisted in its Muslim mass contact campaign, hoping to gain by governmental authority what it could not do through political activity. But it misjudged the temper of the Muslims who proved their mettle in times of peril and adversity. After the Lucknow session there were three successive by-elections at Moradabad, Saharanpur and Bulandshahr. In spite of all its advantages including exercise of official pressure, the Congress was defeated in each one of these by-elections. Thus, by the close of the year 1937 the Congress campaign of Muslim mass contact had met with utter failure.

CHAPTER II

LEAGUE-CONGRESS NEGOTIATIONS

(1937-40)

It may be recalled that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in April 1937 had denounced 'this talk of rights' and opposed any "settlement or understanding with communalist leaders". He characterised as 'mediaeval' any notion of the Muslims being a separate group. Within a year of these pompous utterances the Congress leaders began to see the futility of the Congress policy of ignoring and suppressing the Muslim League and started throwing feelers to the Quaid-i-Azam. But, as an analysis of the correspondence between him and the Congress leaders shows, they only adopted a posture of concern for a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question but were not willing to take any positive steps to promote a satisfactory solution of the problem on the basis of known facts. It was only a strategem to put the blame on the Muslim League for the bitterness that had been created and to slacken its efforts to build itself up; it was not a real effort to meet the legitimate claims of the Muslims.

The story of these negotiations begins with a message which the Quaid-i-Azam sent to Gandhi in May 1937, appealing to him to take up the question of Hindu-Muslim settlement and concentrate his great

influence and efforts on this question. Gandhi sent the following reply on May 22, 1937 :

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Kher (Premier of Bombay) has given me your message. I wish I could do something but I am utterly helpless. My faith in unity is bright as ever; only I see no daylight out of the impenetrable darkness and in such distress I cry out to God for light.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi.[1]

This was a favourite practice of Gandhi. When he wanted to evade a problem he either averred that he was receiving no guidance from his 'inner voice' or pleaded that he saw no ' light ' out of darkness. When the Congress leaders—Babu Rajendra Prasad and Jawaharlal Nehru—repeatedly attacked the Quaid-i-Azam, blaming him for failure to reach a Hindu-Muslim settlement, he had to issue a statement in self-defence on 26 July 1937, in the course of which he revealed his message to Gandhi and the latter's reply quoted above. Writing to Jinnah from his headquarters at Segaon on 19 October, 1937, Gandhi complained of the former having used it as he did, for he claimed it was in answer to a private message and felt 'hurt over your misunderstanding of my attitude'.[2] Gandhi referred to Jinnah's presidential

1 Quoted by Quaid-i-Azam in his presidential address at the Lucknow session of All-India Muslim League, October, 1937.

2 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement*, published by the All-India Muslim League, Delhi, 1939, pp. 1.

address at Lucknow as 'a declaration of war' and desired him to 'reserve poor me as a bridge between the two'. In his reply (Nov. 5, 1937) Jinnah maintained he was quite justified in publishing Gandhi's letter from Teethal for it was not marked 'private' which is the usual practice when publication is not desired. Gandhi had not indicated how his letter or the contents of the letter had been misunderstood. Jinnah contended that his speech at Lucknow was 'purely in self-defence' and Gandhi had made no definite or constructive proposal in his letter. For three months thereafter Gandhi kept silent. Then, hearing from Abul Kalam Azad that Jinnah had complained about the absence of a reply from him, Gandhi in a letter dated 3 February 1938 explained that the reason for his silence was to be found in the note he had sent from Teethal and again asserted that 'the moment I can do something that can bring the two communities together nothing in the world can prevent me from doing so.'[1] Gandhi repeated the charge about Jinnah's speech being 'a declaration of war' and complained that he missed the old nationalist in his speeches. And then naively he added, "What proposal can I make except to ask you on bended knees to be what I had thought you were. But the proposals, to form a basis of unity between the two communities, have surely got to come from you". This shows the evasive attitude which Gandhi had been wont to adopt on the Hindu-Muslim question. Jinnah wrote back to say that he had made

1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement : op. cit.*, p. 4.

no complaint to Azad but had merely stated the facts. He had to publish Gandhi's letter because Nehru and Rajendra Prasad had been blaming him for putting obstacles in the way of a Hindu-Muslim settlement. With regard to Gandhi's charge against his Lucknow speech Jinnah drew Gandhi's attention to the campaign of vilification, misrepresentation and falsehood against his going on in the Congress press. Jinnah asserted that 'nationalism' was not the monopoly of any individual and in those days it was very difficult to define it. Gandhi knew as much as Jinnah as to what were the fundamental points in dispute and it was as much up to Gandhi to suggest ways and means of tackling the problem. Jinnah assured Gandhi that if he felt the moment had come for him to step in, he (Jinnah), would not fail to render all the assistance he could.

Gandhi interpreted Jinnah's letters to mean that they invited not written replies but a personal discussion. Gandhi expressed willingness to see Jinnah but suggested that conversation in the first instance should be opened between him and Azad whom Gandhi regarded as his guide on the Hindu-Muslim question after the death of Dr. Ansari. Jinnah in his reply told Gandhi that if he followed this line he would be repeating the same tragedy as he had done previously when he expressed helplessness on the plea that Dr. Ansari, having pronounced and die-hard views, did not agree, although Gandhi was willing. Jinnah emphasised that a stage had been reached when no doubt should be left that the All-

India Muslim League was the authoritative and representative body of the Muslims of India and on the other hand Gandhi represented the Congress and the other Hindus throughout the country. Gandhi maintained that he could neither represent the Congress nor the Hindus but he would exert all the moral influence he might have with them to secure an honourable settlement. This was a convenient posture which Gandhi always adopted whenever he was confronted with the question of negotiating a solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem. He would never assume any representative capacity so that he could wriggle out of any settlement that might be arrived at. After some more correspondence Gandhi finally agreed to meet Jinnah at Bombay towards the end of April 1938. He called on Jinnah at his residence in Bombay on 28 April, 1938, but nothing came out of the meeting.

Simultaneously Jawaharlal Nehru started correspondence with Jinnah in January, 1938. He adopted different tactics. Having made provocative and offensive speeches against the Quaid-i-Azam and the Muslim League, he admitted in his letter to the former dated 18 January 1938 that an argument carried on through the medium of the press was not desirable and then pretended that he did not know what the points of difference and agreement were. He asked the Quaid-i-Azam to let him know what exactly were the points of dispute which required consideration. Jinnah in his reply welcomed Nehru's recognition of the undesirability of carrying on argu-

ments through the medium of the press but told him that it was equally undesirable to discuss, much less solve, this matter by and through correspondence. Nehru speaking in the tone of a superior authority again said, "If these points of difference are noted down and our attention drawn to them it would make their consideration easier."[1] He, however, maintained that he did not see what more could be done by the Congress regarding religious or cultural matters. The Quaid-i-Azam in his reply referred to the numerous complaints and grievances of a trifling character which Nehru had flung at him and pointed out that Nehru's demand for noting down the points of difference and discussing them through and by means of correspondence was highly undesirable and most inappropriate. Referring to Nehru's suggestion that 'whenever necessity arises every one of us would willingly welcome a talk', Jinnah said that if Nehru thought necessity had arisen and anyone of them was willing he would be glad to see the latter and equally welcome a talk. Jinnah further expressed his view that 'you prefer talking at each other whereas I prefer talking to each other.' The procedure into which Nehru wanted to trap Jinnah was certainly not calculated to promote a meaningful consideration of the Hindu-Muslim problem, because, as the latter said, Nehru knew what the fundamental points in dispute were and the best way to tackle them was to have direct talks. Nehru in reply professed ignorance as to the fundamental points in dispute and repeated

1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement*: *op. cit.*, p. 19.

his demand that the issues be first defined through correspondence.

The Quaid-i-Azam had to point out that there ran through Nehru's letters the same spirit 'of making insinuations and innuendoes and raising all sorts of matters which are not germane to our present subject with which you started, namely how to find the basis of approach to the most vital and prominent question of Hindu-Muslim unity.'[1] The Quaid-i-Azam expressed amazement at Nehru's ignorance of the vital problem which had been tackled from 1925 right up to 1935 by the most prominent leaders but which had remained unsolved. He requested Nehru to study it and not take up a self-complacent attitude. Nehru in reply adopted a pose of humility and said it was possible he was dense or not sufficiently acquainted with the intricacies of the problem and, if so, he deserved to be enlightened. He added, "If you will refer me to any recent statement made in the press or platform which will help me, I shall feel grateful".[2] The Quaid-i-Azam explained to Nehru that the question with which they had started was 'of safeguarding the rights and the interests of the Muslims with regard to their religion, culture, language, personal laws and political rights in the national life, the government and administration of the country. Various suggestions, have been made which will satisfy the Mussulmans and create a sense of security and confidence in them.'[3] Referring to

1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement* : *op. cit.*, p. 31.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 34.
3 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

Nehru's plea for pointing out any recent statements in the press or on the platform in this connection, Jinnah drew his attention to the Fourteen Points, an article entitled 'Through Muslim Eyes, published in the Statesman of 12 February 1938, and another article in New Times of 1 March, 1938, dealing with the following observation made by Nehru at the Haripura session of the Congress : "I have examined this so-called communal question through the telescope and if there is nothing what can you see''. (Copies of these articles were sent as enclosures for facility of reference.) The material was enough to show Nehru that various suggestions had been made or were likely to be made. The Quaid-i-Azam, however, warned that 'if you desire that I should collect all these suggestions and submit to you as a petitioner for you and your colleagues to consider I am afraid I cannot do it for the purpose of carrying on further correspondence with regard to those various points with you'.[1] If, however, Nehru still insisted the Quaid-i-Azam suggested that he should ask the Congress officially to communicate with him and he would place the matter before the Council of the All-India Muslim League, because Nehru was not the Congress President and did not have the same representative capacity.

Nehru's next letter shows that he pounced on the enclosures sent by Jinnah to ridicule and belittle the numerous matters which among others were agitating

1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement*: *op. cit.*, p. 39.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

the Muslim mind, as if he had been waiting for the chance to do so. He started by saying he was glad that 'you have indicated in your last letter a number of points which you have in mind' and further 'I take it that they represent your view-point'.[1] He made light of them by saying that some of them were wholly covered by previous decisions of the Congress and some others were hardly capable of discussion. He then formulated in his own way certain points out of the enclosures and proceeded to turn and twist them and pronounced adverse judgement on them in the manner of a supreme authority disposing of the petition of a supplicant. He ridiculed the demand for recognising the All-India Muslim League as the authoritative and representative organization of the Muslims of India and boastfully asserted that "the more important the organization the more the attention paid to it, but this importance does not come from outside recognition but from inherent strength".[2] He pretended not to understand the significance of the Quaid-i-Azam wanting an official communication from the Congress.

Jinnah in his reply told Nehru that his letter had been to him a most painful reading. He added, "I can only express my great regret at your turning and twisting what I wrote to you and putting entirely a wrong complexion upon the position I have placed before you at your request. You have formulated certain points in your letter which you father upon

1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement* : *op. cit.*, p. 51.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 66.

me, to begin with, as my proposals. I sent you extracts from the press because I believed you when you repeatedly asserted and appealed to me that you would be grateful if I would refer you to any recent statements made in the press or on the platform which would help you in understanding matters. Those are some of the matters which are undoubtedly agitating Muslim India, but the question how to meet them and to what extent and by what means and methods, is the business, I have said before, of every true nationalist to solve.........I am extremely sorry to find that you have in your letter already pronounced your judgement and given your decision on a good many of them.........Your tone and language again display the same arrogance and militant spirit as if the Congress is the sovereign power and, as an indication, you extend your patronage by saying that 'obviously the Muslim League is an important communal organization and we deal with it as such, as we have to deal with all organizations and individuals that come within our ken. We do not determine the measure of importance or distinction they possess', and then you mention various other organizations. Here I may add that in my opinion, as I have publicly stated so often, unless the Congress recognises the Muslim League on a footing of complete equality and is prepared to negotiate for a Hindu-Muslim settlement, we shall have to wait and depend upon our inherent strength which will 'determine the measure of importance or distinction it possesses".[1]

1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement*: *op. cit.*, pp. 72-74.

Since he had been supplied, at his own request, with the material indicating some of the lines on which the Muslim mind was working, the proper course for Nehru was to give careful thought to the material and then discuss it with the Quaid-i-Azam instead of pronouncing his judgment in a pontifical style. This showed that Nehru's real intention was not to seek a solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem but evade it and put the blame on the Muslim League.

With regard to Nehru's complaint about alleged falsehoods appearing about the Congress in the Urdu press the Quaid-i-Azam said he could express no opinion without investigation but he asserted that he could give Nehru numerous falsehoods that had appeared in the Congress press and in statements of Congressmen with regard to the All-India Muslim League and those associated with it, and also reports appearing in the Congress press and speeches of Congressmen which were daily misrepresenting and vilifying the Muslim composition of the Bengal, Sind, Punjab and Assam Governments with a view to breaking those Governments. But, the Quaid-i-Azam pointed out, that was not the subject matter of their correspondence and besides no useful purpose would be served in doing so.

Nehru appeared to be a little shaken by the last letter of the Quaid-i-Azam. In his last letter dated 16 April, 1938, he said, "I am exceedingly sorry that anything I have written should have caused you pain".[1] But he repeated his presumption that the

1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement*: *op. cit.*, p. 76.

extracts sent by the Quaid-i-Azam represented his mind and when he (Nehru) saw something concrete he wanted to give his reaction to it. With regard to the Quaid-i-Azam's complaint about Nehru writing in an arrogant and militant spirit as if the Congress were the sovereign power Nehru said nothing to make amends for the offence he had given but tauntingly remarked, "I am painfully conscious of the fact that the Congsess is not a sovereign power and that it is circumscribed in a hundred ways and further that it may have to go through the wilderness many a time again before it achieves its objective".[1] The implication of this remark is obvious—Nehru meant to convey a veiled threat that if and when the Congress became a sovereign power it would deal with the Muslim League in a different way. On this unhappy note the correspondence ended. It confirmed the impression that Nehru was not really interested in finding a solution of the Hindu-Muslim question, for he did not proceed to have any discussion with the Quaid-i-Azam.

The next development in this connection was a call by the Congress President, Subhas Chandra Bose, on the Quaid-i-Azam at his Bombay residence in mid-May 1938. In the course of the talks Jinnah suggested that any agreement that might be arrived at between the League and the Congress should be based on a clear understanding of the position of the two bodies which should be as follows : "The Congress and the All-India Muslim League as the authoritative and representative organisation of the Muslims of

1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement* : *op. cit.*, p. 77.

India have hereby agreed to the following terms of a Hindu-Muslim settlement by way of a pact."[1] Bose on behalf of the Congress Working Committee handed to Jinnah a Note on 14 May 1938 which contended that the Congress could not accept the position of representing one community and thus itself becoming a communal organisation. All that the Note conceded was that the Muslim League 'is an organisation representing a large body of Muslim opinion which must carry weight,'[2] but in the next breath warned that the Congress would be bound to consult other existing Muslim organisations which had cooperated with the Congress in the past. These other organisations were mere satellites of the Congress and at its beck and call; they could be used to negative any suggestions that the League might put forward for the protection of Muslim rights and interests. Bose in his letter dated 15 May 1938 stated that it remained to proceed to the next stage, namely appointment of respective committees which would jointly settle the terms of understanding. The Note and the letter were placed by the Quaid-i-Azam before the Executive Council of the All-India Muslim League which passed three resolutions on the subject on 5 June 1938. The Council made it clear that it would not be possible for the Muslim League to treat or negotiate with the Congress the question of Hindu-Muslim settlement except on the basis that the Muslim League was the authoritative and representative organisation

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1 *Hindu-Muslim Settlement*: *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

of the Mussulmans of India. It also considered it undesireable to include any Muslim in the personnel of the Committee that might be appointed by the Congress. With regard to the other minorities the Coucil reiterated the League's policy that their rights and interests would be safeguarded and the Muslim League would consult the representatives of such minorities and any other interest that may be involved whe nnecessary.

Bose in his reply dated 25 July 1938 gave the Congress Working Committee's reactions to the Muslim League's suggestions. The Congress again turned down the demand for recognition of the League's status as the representative body of the Muslims. It referred to the Muslim members of the Congress and other Muslim organisations. It laid down a proposition that the status of organisations did not accrue to them by any defining of it but through the service to which an organisation dedicated itself. It also defined the nature of membership of the Congress though a Congressman did not cease to belong to the Faith in which he was born and bred up ; he was in and out of the Congress by virtue of his endorsement of the political principles and policy of the Congress. The League's suggestion that no Muslim be included in the Congress negotiating committee was also rejected. As regards the other minorities the Congress could not appreciate the League's interest in their welfare, for it thought the League was only concerned wilh a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question. If other minorities had a grievance the

Congress was ready to deal with them, for it claimed to be 'representative of all India without distinction of caste or creed.'

Replying on behalf of the Executive Council of the Muslim League which met on 25th July 1938, the Quaid-i-Azam stated that in defining the status the League Council was not actuated by any motive of securing an admission but had merely stated the fact. He referred to the many occasions between 1916 and 1935 on which negotiations between the League and the Congress had taken place on the footing that the League is the representative organisation of the Muslims. But in view of the fact that the position, in fact, the very existence of the Muslim League, had been questioned by Nehru in one of his speeches as President of the Congress asserting that there were only two parties in the country the Congress and the British Government it was considered necessary by the League Council to inform the Congress of the basis on which negotiations between the two organisations could proceed. The League Council asserted that the Muslim members of the Congress whose number was insignificant did not and could not represent the Muslims of India for the reason that they had as members of the Congress disabled themseves from representing or speaking on behalf of the Muslim community. If it were not so, the whole claim made by the Congress regarding its national character would fall to the ground. As regards the other Muslim organisations, Jinnah pointed out that if they individually or collectively had been in a position to speak on behalf of

the Muslims of India, the President of the Congress and Gandhi would not have initiated negotiations with the Muslim League for a settlement of the Hindu-Muslims question. Regarding inclusion of Muslims in the Congress negotiating committee the Quaid-i-Azam said such Muslims would not command the confidence of either the Hindus or the Muslims and their position would be most embarrassing in the very nature of the issues, for the League and the Congress committees would meet to consider and settle the Hindu-Muslim question. As for the other minorities, the original Note of the Congress itself had mentioned them, and the League had expressed willingness to consult them as and when necessary in consonance with its declared policy.

The Congress Working Committee read the Muslim League's reply to mean that it did not expect the Congress, implicitly or explicitly' to acknowledge the League's status as the representative body of the Muslims of India ; and if this view were accepted by the League the Congress Working Committee would appoint five of its members to negotiate with the League Committee. In reply Jinnah conveyed to the Congress President on 10 October 1938 the League's regret that the Congress should have misread the League Council's reply. He re-stated the League's readiness to proceed with negotiations for settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question on the basis indicated in the League Council's resolutions and to appoint its representatives for the purpose. The Congress President, however, did not reply to this communication

and the move for League-Congress negotiations, initiated by the Quaid-i-Azam in his message convey. ed to Gandhi at Teethal, fell through, because of the Congress's obduracy in refusing to conduct negotiations on the proper footing which could be expected to yield results.

For over a year after this breakdown of negotiations, the Congress did not budge from its position, and the Congress Governments in the provinces continued to persecute and brow-beat the Muslims into submission. World War II broke out early in September 1939. The Congress thought it was a heaven-sent opportunity to corner the British Government and force its hands to yield to the Congress demand for declaration of independence, recognition of the right to frame a constitution through a constituent assembly and the setting up of an interim government at the centre of the Congress's conception, namely a government responsible to the Central Legislature which would naturally be dominated by the Congress regardless of the position and interests of the Muslims and the minorities. The British Government did not concede the Congress demand but suggested that an understanding may be reached between the League and the Congress which would pave the way for expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and inclusion therein of representatives of the Congress, the League and other parties and formation of Coalition Ministries in the provinces. In a huff the Congress Ministries resigned as a protest against the British Government's refusal to submit to the Congress ukase. The Viceroy

had asked the Congress and the League leaders to hold discussion and reach agreement on the lines indicated by him. Jinnah met Gandhi and other Congress leaders but they informed him that they could not discuss any question with regard to matters referred to by the Viceroy relating to the provincial field or 'at the Centre' until the British Government had complied with their demands. In his anxiety for an interim settlement for the duration of the war the Quaid-i-Azam offered the following terms to the Congress[1]-coalition ministries in provinces, legistation affecting Muslims not to be enforced if two-thirds of their number in a provincial Lower House were opposed to it, the Congress flag not to be flown on public institutions, understanding as to the use of Bande Matram, and the Congress to cease wrecking tactics against the Muslim League. But the Congress leaders rejected the offer. Thus, another opportunity for making progress in the constitutional field was lost mainly because of the monopolistic attitude of the Congress and its insistence on ignoring the just claims and interests of the Muslims and the minorities.

About this time Nehru privately met the Quaid-i-Azam at the house of Liaquat Ali Khan and some discussion took place between them. After this meeting Nehru wrote a letter dated 18 October 1939 in which he expressed his distress that the Hindu-Muslim problem had not been solved so far and even confessed that he was ashamed of himself 'in so far as I have

1 Menon, V. P., *The Transfer of Power in India*, (Calcutta, 1957), p. 72.

not been able to contribute anything substantial to its solution.'[1] He expressed the view that 'with your good-will and commanding position in the Muslim League that should not be so difficult as people imagine'.[2] He also indicated that he would like to meet him again at any early date. On 1 December 1939 Nehru again wrote to Jinnah asking him to fix a date when he could again see him. The Quaid-i-Azam immediately replied to say that he would be very glad to see him and fix up any date and asked him what date and time would suit him.

The Quaid-i-Azam issued, on 8 December 1939, an appeal to the Muslims of India to observe 22 December as a 'day of deliverance aud thanksgiving' as a mark of relief that the Congress Governments had at last ceased to function. Nehru in a letter to the Quaid-i-Azam dated 9 December, referring to this appeal, expressed the view that 'our sense of values and objectives in life differ so very greatly.'[3] He therefore wondered what purpose would be served by their discussing the problems that confronted them. It was natural that the Muslims who had undergone such terrible sufferings under Congress rule should feel the urge to express a sense of relief at the end of Congress Governments. Nehru would not countenance their heaving a sigh of relief lest it bring out the extent of Muslim dissatisfaction with the Congress misrule. He did not explain as to how the obser-

1 Nehru, Jawaharlal, *A Bunch of old Letter*, (Bombay, 1958), p. 392.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 393.
3 *The War* : *op. cit.*, p. 47.

vance in a solemn atmosphere of a day of thanksgiving by Muslims stood in the way of discussion of the all-important Hindu-Muslim problem. In his reply the Quaid-i-Azam drew Nehru's attention to two points—the Congress should be prepared to treat the Muslim League as the representative organisation of the Muslims of India; and the League could not endorse the Congress demand for the declaration by the British Government as laid down in the resolution of the Congress Working Committee, unless they reached an agreement on the Hindu-Muslim question. He explained that if happily they could settle the Hindu-Muslim question they would then be in a position to evolve an agreed formula for a demand of declaration by the British Government that would satisfy them. None of the two suggestions was acceptable to Gandhi or Nehru or other Congress leaders. Nehru still expressed a desire to see Jinnah later in the month at Bombay. The latter readily agreed.

Nehru in his letter dated 14 December made a great grievance of the Quaid-i-Azam's appeal for observance of 'deliverance day' which, he felt, revealed a gulf that separated them in their approach to public problems. He again asserted that the Congress was wholly unable to consider the League as the representative organisation of the Muslims. As regards the League's refusal to associate itself with the Congress demand for declaration from the British Government in terms of the Congress resolution Nehru alleged that this meant that, apart from com-

munal questions, they differed entirely on purely political questions. He, therefore, saw no purpose in their meeting at that stage. He, however, still wanted to appear reasonable and conciliatory; so he conveyed an assurance that they were always prepared to have free and frank discussion of the communal or other problems as between the League and the Congress. Discrepancy between profession and practice could not go further! The Quaid-i-Azam in his reply pointed out that the Muslim League was not opposed to the Congress demand for *a* declaration from the Britsh Government, but it could not endorse the Congress demand for *the* declaration as laid down in the resolution of the Working Committee and confirmed by the All-India Congress Committee on 10 October 1939 for reasons he had already explained. The Quaid-i-Azam inquired that if this resolution of the Congrees could not be modified and if the Congress was unable to treat the Muslim League as the representative organisation of the Muslims what did Nehru expect or wish him to do? In his reply dated 19 December 1939 Nehru recognised the difference between *a* declaration and *the* kind of declaration demanded by the Congress but denied that there could be any diffrence of opinion as to the demand for a declaration for recognition of India's independence and the right of her people to frame their constitution through a Constituent Assembly. This, he held, had nothing to do with the Hindu-Muslim question. He did not realise or pretended not to realise that the independence of the Congress's con-

ception with its corollary of the right to frame a constitution through a Constituent Assembly dominated by the Hindu majority, without a prior settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question, jeopardised the vital rights and interests of the Muslims and placed them completely at the mercy of the Hindu majority. Nehru looked upon the League's decision to observe 'deliverance day' as a 'psychological barrier', which, in his opinion, prevented mutual approach and discussion.

The correspondence summarised above was released by Jinnah early in January 1940, because Nehru, contrary to his profession of good-will, had again started attacking the former in his speeches. Nehru accused the Quaid-i-Azam of 'being bent upon preservation of British domination over India'[1] a charge which the latter characterised as 'not only unwarranted but mean'.[2] Since Nehru had given incorrect and misleading reasons for refusing to continue talks, the Quaid-i-Azam released the aforementioned correspondence, leaving it to the public to judge the impossible attitude taken up by Nehru and the Congress.

It is clear that, on one pretext or another, the Congress leaders always managed to cloud and burke the issues of Hindu-Muslim settlement. This they did in the hope, which proved to be forlorn, that they would somehow be able to achieve an independence that would establish their hegemony over the entire sub-continent and by-pass the Muslim nation.

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1 *The War: op. cit.*, p. 45.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 45.

CHAPTER III

THE LAHORE RESOLUTION (1940)

A historic session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Lahore in March 1940. On 23rd March an epoch-making resolution was moved at that session demanding that areas of the subcontinent of India in which the Muslims were numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones, should be grouped to constitute independent States. Having regard to the place of its adoption, the resolution was originally referred to as the Lahore Resolution. The Hindu Press, however, dubbed it as the Pakistan Resolution and eventually, in popular parlance, it came to be called as such. The Lahore Resolution was the beginning of the end of the administrative unity of the entire subcontinent, which had been created by the Muslim Emperors and continued by the British; within eight years of its adoption the subcontinent was partitioned and Pakistan appeared as an independent sovereign State on its map.

The conception of Pakistan (i.e., a separate homeland for the Muslims) has been traced back by the historians to the entry of Islam in the subcontinent, and attributed to Muhammad b. Qasim, the first Muslim conqueror of Sind, early in the eighth century, to Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1625), to Shah Wali Allah (d. 1762) and later to Jamal al-Din Afghani (d. 1897)

and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (d. 1898). The partition of the subcontinent[1] has been explained as the inevitable consequence of the irreconcilable differences between the Hindus and Muslims, which in their turn were the logical conclusion of Hindu dreams of *Hindu-pad-padshahi*. One could easily read clear indications of these dreams in the rise and growth of Hindu nationalism in the second quarter of the nineteenth century and of Hindu revivalist movements in its last decades. Early in the present century, the policy of the Indian National Congress with regard to the partition of Bengal and the movement launched by it to get it annulled removed all doubts about the intentions of the Hindu leaders and their ultimate goal. The Muslim reaction to these ever-growing demonstrations of Hindu communalism was the demand for separate electorates. After a short interval of harmonious relations beginning with the Lucknow Pact of 1916, the forces of communal hatred reappeared in the early twenties in the form of Shudhi and Sangathan movements. The shortsightedness of the Congress leaders did not allow them to be fair to the Muslims. Even the most enlightened of them, Moti Lal Nehru, for instance, failed to do justice to their cause; the Nehru Report made the cleavage

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1 It may be of some interest to note that on the eve of the Battle of Tarain (1192 A. C.) Sultan Mu'izz al-Din had suggested to his adversary, Prithviraj to partition the subcontinent, leaving the region of Sirhind, Panjab and Multan with him (the Sultan) and retain the rest of Hindustan for himself. The actual words of the famous historian. Firishtah are :

با شما صلح کنیم که سر هند و پنجاب و ملتان باما باشد و باقی ممالک هندوستان از شما

See Firishtah (Bombay ed.), Vol. I, p. 101.

between the Hindus and Muslims wider than ever. In fact they failed to realize that the Muslims of the subcontinent were determined to secure liberation from the British as well as the Hindus by establishing an independent homeland of their own.

They believed that they could suppress Muslim aspirations by using weapons of oppression, but this experiment during the period of Congress Rule in the provinces (1937-39) failed miserably; in fact it intensified and further strengthened the determination of the Muslims to win their cause. The existense of two nations which had always been a fact in the history of the subcontinent, since its conquest by the Muslims now became clearer than ever.

"The main social result of the introduction of Islam as a religion into India," says a modern Hindu historian, "was division of society on a vertical basis. Before the tenth century Hindu society was divided horizontally and neither Buddhism nor Jainism affected the division. They were not unassimilable elements and filled in easily with the existing divisions. Islam, on the other hand, split Indian society into two sections from top to bottom and what has now come to be known in the phraseology of today as two separate nations came into being from the beginning. At all stages they were different and hardly any social communications or intermingling existed between them."[1]

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1 Pannikar, K.M., *A Survey of Indian History.*

As early as the beginning of the eleventh century the great Muslim scholar,

(Continued on page 4)

Genesis of Pakistan

In short, the fact that the population of the subcontinent was comprised of different nationalities had made it impossible for them to be fused into a single nation, and the nation, however nebulous, of a separate Muslim block and an alliance or federation or different States had been present in the minds of some people as early as, if not earlier than, the middle of the nineteenth century. Since then eminent writers had been expressing this idea in one form or the other. We may briefly refer to them:

(1) It will be recalled that the Revolution of 1857 gave an impetus to the demand that the East India Company should not be allowed to contiuue to exercise political power in the subcontinent. In June 1858 John Bright, speaking in the Parliament on a bill had questioned the possibility of so extensive a country, as India, with its different nations and languages, being consolidated into one compact and enduring Empire. He suggested that instead of an Empire, there should be different Presidencies and States, so that if at any future period the sovereignty

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(Continued from page 3)
al-Biruni, had made some interesting observations on Hindu exclusivism. "All their (Hindus') fanaticism" he wrote "is directed against those who do not belong to them—against all foreigners. They call them *Malechha* i.e. impure, and forbid having connection with them, be it by inter-marriage or by any other kind of relationship, or by sitting, eating or drinking with them, because thereby they think they would be polluted. They consider so impure any thing which touches the fire and the water of a foreigner, and no household can exist without those two elements.........They are not allowed to receive anybody who does not belong to them, even if he wished it or was inclined to their religion. This renders any connection with them quite impossible and constitutes the widest of gulf between them and us." See Sachau, Edward C., *al-Beruni's India* (London, 1910), Vol. I, pp. 19-20.

of England were to be withwrawn, they should leave so many Presidencies built up and compacted together, each able to support its own independence and its own Government.[1]

(2) In 1879 Jamaluddin Afghani thought of the possibility of establishing a Muslim Republic embracing the Central Asian Republics, Afghanistan and the Muslim majority areas of the subcontinent.[2]

(3) Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was the first person to emphasize the fact that India was a continent rather than a country. Speaking on January 16, 1883, in the course of discussion on the local-self Government Bill, he stated this fact and pointed out that India was inhabited by peoples belonging to different races and following different creeds. In fact, as early as 1867 he had clearly foretold the separation of the two nations—Hindus and Muslims. His biographer Mawlana Hali has reproduced his conversation with one of his friends, Mr. Shakespear: "During these days, when Hindi-Urdu controversy was going on in Benares I met Mr. Shakespear who was posted there as the Divisional Commissioner. I was saying something about the education of Muslims, and Mr. Shakespear was listening with an expression of amazement, when at length, he said: This is the first occasion when I have heard you speak about the progress of the Muslims alone. Before this you were

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1 *Selected Speeches of Rt.-Hon. John Bright on Public Questions* (J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., London), p. 14.

2 Qureshi, I.H., *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent*, (Mouton & Co , The Hague, 1962), p. 295.

always keen about the welfare of your countrymen in general ! I said, 'Now I am convinced that both these nations will not join wholeheartedly in anything. At present there is no open hostility between the two communities, but on account of the so-called educated people it will increase immediately in future. He who lives will see.' Mr. Shakespear thereupon said, 'I am also extremely sorry but I am confident about the accuracy of this prophecy.'[1]

(4) An eminent Muslim writer, Abdul Halim Sharar, expressed similar ideas in an editorial of his magazine, 'Muhazzib' of August 23, 1890, "Times are such" he writes, "that the religious rites of one nation cannot be performed without injuring susceptibilities of the other. If things have reached such a stage, it would be wise to partition India into Hindu and Muslim provinces and exchange the population."[2]

(5) In 1899 Theodore Morrison proposed as a solution of India's political disabilities the concentration of the entire Muslim population of the sub-continent in the territory extending from Arga to Peshawar.[3]

(6) The plan to partition the subcontinent into Muslim and Hindu India was mooted in or about October 1917, on the occasion of the Stockholm Conference of the Socialist International in a written statement submitted by Dr. Abdul Jabbar Kheiri and

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1 Ḥālī, Mawlānā Alṭāf Ḥusayn, *Hayat-i-Jawaid*, (Anjuman Taraqui Urdu, Hind, Delhi, 1939), Part I, p. 122.

2 Quoted in Khurshid, A.S., *Karwan-i-Sahafat*, (Karachi, 1964), p. 67.

3 *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society*, Vol. XIX, Jan.-April, 1966, Lahore, p. 7.

his younger brother, Professor Abdus Sattar Kheiri.[1]

(7) In April 1920, one Muhammad Abdul Qadir Bilgrami (as assumed name) published *An open letter* to Mr. Gandhi advocating the division of the subcontinent between the Hindus and the Muslims, even giving a list of the districts, fundamentally not too different from the present boundaries of East and West Pakistan.[2]

(8) In the All-India Muslim League Session, held at Ahmedabad in 1921, Mawlana Hasrat Mohani, the great poet and revolutionary, referred to the fear of the Muslims that on the establishment of Self Government the Hindus would use their political power through their numerical superiority to crush the Muslims. Three years later he put forward a scheme to recognise the bicommunal (Hindu-Muslim) basis of the future Independent State and to convert the Muslim majority provinces into Muslim States and the Hindu majority provinces into Hindu States.

(9) Sardar Gul Khan, President of the Islamic Anjuman, Dera Ismail Khan, giving evidence before the North-West Frontier Committee (1924) stated: "The Hindu-Muslim unity will never become a fact. We would very much rather see the separation of the Hindus and the Muhammadans, 23 crores of Hindus to the South and 8 crores of Muslims to the North. Give the whole portion from Raskumari to Arga to

1 *Proceedings, Stockholm Conference of Socialist International*, pp. 407-408.

2 The second edition of this letter was published in the form of a pamphlet from Badayun in 1922. It is now being republished by the Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi.

Hindus and from Arga to Peshawar to Muhammadans."[1]

(10) In 1924 the veteran Hiudu leader, Lala Lajpat Rai evolved a plan of partition of India and reluctantly conceded to the Muslims—the North West Frontier, Western Punjab, Sind and Eastern Bengal.[2]

(11) In June 1925 Mawlana Mohammed Ali advocated separation and right of self-determination for the people of northern areas of the Subcontinent for economic, strategic, religious and cultural reasons.[3]

(12) In July 1925 William Archibald, sometime Principal of the M.A.O. College, Aligarh, foresaw a powerful Muhammadan combination in the north-west in alliance with Afghanistan.[4]

(13) In 1927, Maulana Obedullah Sindhi, who had taken shelter in Russia and then in Turkey, formulated a scheme for federal system in the sub-continent on behalf of Mahabharat Sarvorajaya Party. The scheme contemplated redistribution of provincial boundaries of India and creation of three zones : North Western, Eastern and Southern. The North Western Zone was to comprise, the Panjab (Eastern and Western Panjab and Gujrat), Frontier Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan.[5]

(14) In March 1928, the Times Correspondent in India envisioned effective Muslim rule in north India

1 *Report of the Narth-West Frontier Enquiry*, 1924, p. 122.

2 *The Tribune*, (Lahore), December 14, 1924.

3 *The Comrade* (Delhi), June 5, 1925.

4 See *Contemporary Review*, July 1925, p. 46.

5 Zafar Hasan, Aibak, *Ap Biti*, (Mansoor Book House, Lahore, 1966), Vol. II, p. 105.

and prophesied the division of the Punjab and the creation of a solid Muslim bloc from Peshawar to the mouth of the Indus.

(15) In December 1928, the *Empire Review* made favourable analysis of a suggestion for breaking up the Indian provinces into small units in accordance with ethnic and local sentiment, and thus to allay communal fears. The implication was that at some future date it might be practicable or necessary to merge Muslim and Hindu areas into some sort of separate blocs.

(16) In 1929, Sir Ross Masood, in an interview with the Governor of the United Provinces said : "The differences of the Muslims with the Hindus are deep-seated, and the Muslims felt that they would be swamped in a self-governing India. Their minds were turning more and more to the idea of a federation between modernised Afghanistan with Persia in the background and with Allies in the frontier independent territories. The Punjab Muslims have long been talking among themselves of a union of the Northern Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and Afghanistan. A generation ago a union with Afghanistan would have been regarded with horror, for the Pathan was a very popular person in Northern India ; but the memory of his raids is dying out, and at present, at all events it seemed preferable to many of them to run the risk of engaging him as an ally rather than to accept the certainty of domination by a Hinduised Central Government."[1]

1 India Office Library, London, Halifax Collection, Mss. European, c. 125/5 ; letter of the Governor of U.P. to the Viceroy, dated 3rd Dec. 1929.

(17) In December 1929, Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, in his address as Chairman, Reception Committee of the All-India Khilafat Conference, Lahore, observed :

"India's freedom and progress depends on the fact that Muslims should be given such an area in northern India which should consist of two or three provinces or be made one province. In the same way, in eastern India, Bengal should be devided in such a manner that Muslims should form 80 per cent of the population. Muslims themselves should instead of rights, demand a separate country and homeland.[1]

(18) In the Presidential address delivered at the annual session of the All-India Muslim League at Allahabad, on December 29, 1930, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal said:

"I would like to see the Punjab, North West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State, self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be final destiny of the Muslim, at least of North West India."

(19) In March 1931, "the Round Table"[2] thought it certainly possible that India might break up, first into a Muslim and a Hindu India, and later

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1 Afzal, Rafiq, *Origin of the Idea for a Separate Muslim State*, (The Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan, Jan./April 1966), p. 179.

2 *Round Table*, March 1931, p. 346.

into a number of a national States as Europe did, after the Renaissance and the Reformation.

(20) In November 1931, the "*Economist*[1]" saw the Muslims manoeuvring for an effective control of the entire Indus basin, Eastern Bengal and a corridor between the two.

(21) In December 1931, similar sentiments were voiced in a debate in the House of Commons by Col. Goodman, Sir Alfred Knox and Sir Henry Page Croft.[2]

(22) In 1932 Sir Reginald Gaddock observed that if Norway and Sweden could not keep together, if Ulster and the Irish Free State could not be got to unite, how can it be expected that the infinitely greater diversities and divergent racial elements to be found in India could be welded into one self-governing and democratic whole.[3]

(23) John Coatman prophesied: "it may be that Muslim India in the north and north-west is destined to become a separate Muslim State or part of a Muslim Empire.[4]

(24) In January 1933 Chaudhri Rahmat Ali, a student at Cambridge, issued a pamphlet entitled *Now or Never* and coined the term *Pakistan* (lit. land of the pure); it was derived from the initial letters of Panjab, North-West Frontier Province (also called

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1 *Economist*, 7 November 1931.

2 H.C. 260, December 1931, cols. 1354, 1370, 1380.

3 Gaddock, R., *Dilemma in India*, (1932), pp. 7-8.

4 Coatman, J., *Years of Destiny*: *India*, 1926-32, p. 376.

Afghan Province) Kashmir, Sind and the last syllable of Baluchistan. In the pamphlet the author stated that in the above mentioned five Northern Provinces of India, the Muslims were about thirty millions out of a total population of about forty millions, and their religion and culture, history and tradition, social code and economic system were fundamentally different from those of most peoples living in the rest of India. In the name of the Muslim brethren who lived in 'Pakistan' he demanded a separate Federation of these predominently Muslim Units. Rehmat Ali launched the Pakistan National Movement by publishing and distributing pamphlets, tracts, hand-bills and other literature. A weekly newspaper under the title '*Pakistan*' was also started.

(25) The Pakistan Scheme was the subject matter of questions in the proceedings of the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee in 1932. The Muslim witnesses described it as a students' scheme and it was considered by them as chimerical and impracticable.[1] Mr. J. L. French, former district Magistrate in the Panjab however told the Joint Committee that the idea of a great Islamic State was being discussed in Muslim circles in the Panjab and the North-West Frontier Province.[2]

Some of the British members however expressed their opposition to the idea. The Dutchess of Etholl, M.P. felt that the creation of Pakistan might mean

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1 Minutes of Evidence—Joint Committee of Indian Constitutional Reform (Session 1932-33), Vol. II, p. 1496.

2 *Ibid*, pp. 16718-20.

civil war in India.[1] Mr. Vyvyan Adams voiced his disapproval of the Pakistan Scheme in his speech in the House of Commons.[2] On the other hand Major Yeats Brown saw no alternative to Pakistan. The Hindu leaders on the other hand did not consider Pakistan as an impracticable students' dream, Mehr Chand Khanna, Prof. Rai and others expressed grave fears regarding the Pakistan Movement.[3]

(26) The editors of the Encyclopaedia of Islam published in 1937 (First Edition) in its IV Supplement took note of Pakistan Movement.

(27) A German daily printed a front page story before the war and the movement found mention in Amir Shakib Arsalan's review, *Less Nations Arabes*, published in French.[4]

Thus, by the time the All-India Muslim League was reorganized under the leadership of Jinnah the partition idea had found its way into the ideas of various politicians, writers and the intellegentsia in general. Nevertheless it took the League another three years to make a formal demand for it. Let us now see how this demand took its final shape and through what processes it had to pass.

In his correspondence with Jinnah, Iqbal canvassed the division of India. In a letter dated the 28th May, 1937, he wrote: "but the enforcement and development of the *Shari'at* of Islam is impossible in

1 The Duchess of Atholl, *The Main Facts of the Problem*, (London, 1933), pp. 25-26.

2 1935 Parliamentary Debates 301 H.C. 58.

3 *Civil and Military Gazette*, August 19, 1934.

4 Qureshi, I. H., *op. cit.* p. 298.

this country without a free Muslim State or States. This has been my honest conviction for many years and I still believe this to be the only way to solve the problem of bread for Muslims as well as to secure a peaceful India. If such a thing is impossible in India the only other alternative is a civil war which as a matter of fact has been going on for sometime in the shape of Hindu-Muslim riots." Again in his Letter of 21st June 1937, he stated: "In these circumstances it is obvious that the only way to a peaceful India is a re-distribution of the country on the lines of racial, religious and linguistic affinities. I remember Lord Lothian told me before I left England that my scheme was the only possible solution of the troubles of India, but that it would take twenty five years to come."[1]

On the 18th of April 1938 Abdul Jabbar Pahlown, M.L.A. (Bengal) gave notice for moving a resolution in the Subjects Committee of the Special Session of the All-India Muslim League which, *inter alia*, provided: India-should be divided into two parts namely Northern and Southern India—with their separate army, navy." The resolution was not placed before the Subjects Committee as it was found to be time-barred.

Later in the same year (October 1938) Sind provincial Muslim League Conference was held at Karachi under the presidentship of Qaid-i-Azam himself. In his presidential address, Mr. Jinnah referred to the

[1] *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah* (published by Sh. Mohammad Ashraf, Lahore, 1956), p. 23.

breaking up of the Republic of Czechoslovakia and added that just as the Sudetan Germans were not defenceless and survived oppression and persecution for two decades so also the Mussalmans were not defenceless and could not give up their national entity and aspirations in this great continent. He accused the Congress of trying to destroy the Muslim League, and dominate the Muslims by dividing them. He warned that this would result in India being divided.[1] The Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Conference, Sir Abdulla Haroon, hinted at the possibility of 'an independent federation of Muslim States.[2]' Sheikh Abdul Majid threatened 'that if the Congress did not concede Moslem rights, Muslims would have no alternative but to fall back upon the Pakistan Scheme' and that 'nothing would prevent Muslims from Karachi to Calcutta to march to their own self-determination.'[3] In the Subjects Committee of the Conference a resolution was tabled which *inter alia*, provided:

"The Sind Provincial Muslim League Conference considers absolutely essential in the interests of an abiding peace of the vast Indian Continent and in the interests of unhampered cultural development, the economic and social betterment and political self-determination of the two nations, known as Hindus and Muslims, that India may be divided into two federations, namely the federation of

1 *Leader*, 11 October, 1938.
2 *Times of India*, 10 October, 1938.
3 *Statesman*, October 12, 1938.

Muslim States and the federation of non-Muslim States.

This Conference therefore recommends to the All-India Muslim League to devise a scheme of constitution under which Muslim majortiy provinces, Muslim Indian States and areas inhabited by a majority of Muslims may attain full independence in the form of a federation of their own with permission to admit any other Muslim State beyond the Indian frontiers to join the Federation and with such safeguards for non-Muslim minorities as may be conceded to the Muslim minorities in the non-Muslim Federation of India."[1]

After discussion, the above draft was substituted by the following:—

"This Conference considers it absolutely essential, in the interests of an abiding peace of the vast Indian continent and in the interest of unhampered cultural development, the economic and social betterment and political self-determination of the two nations, known as Hindus and Muslims, to recommend to the All-India Muslim League to review and revise the entire conception of what should be the suitable constitution for India which will secure honourable and legitimate States to them."[2]

Choudhury Khaliquzzaman and Mr. Abdur-Rahman Siddiqi went to London in March 1939 and had talks with the Marquess of Zetland, the Secretary

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1 *Stateman,* October, 12, 1938.

2 *Pioneer,* 16 October 1938.

of State for India and Col. Muirhead and suggested to them the partitioning of India. Professor Rushbrooke Williams realised the significance of the new Muslim opinion demanding a separate zone and said that testified to the degree of alarm characteristic of Muslim uncertainty.[1] The *Round Table* noted that a fresh impetus had been given to the movement for creating 'a so-called Pakistan' of the Muslim provinces in the north.[2]

Zonal Schemes

In 1938-39 various proposals advocating partition and the establishment of Muslim zones and separate States were put forward by different individuals. Some of the notable schemes were those proposed by (i) Dr. Abdul Latif of Hyderabad, (ii) Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, then Premier of the Panjab, (iii) Mian Kifayatali[3], and (iv) Dr. Syed Zafarul Hasan and Dr. M. Afzal Qadri of Aligarh.[4]

The partition idea was spreading so fast and going so deep into the politics of the day that the Muslim League had to seriously consider it. Accordingly its Working Committee met at Castle Mustafa, Meerut, on the 26th of March, 1939 and passed the following Resolution:

"Whereas the All-India Muslim League is opposed to the Scheme of Federation embodied in the

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1 "Indian Constitutional Problems" in *Nineteenth Century*, March 1939. pp. 292-93,

2 *Round Table*, March 1939, p. 362,

3 His Scheme was published under the caption: Confederacy of India, by a Punjabi.

4 This was popularly known as *The Aligarh Scheme*.

Government of India Act, 1935, and whereas the working of the Provincial part of the Constitution has created grave apprehensions amongst Muslims and other minorities regarding their future, because the Provincial Scheme has utterly failed to safeguard even the elementary rights of the Muslim minorities in various provinces, and whereas by a resolution passed at the Patna Session in December, 1938, the President of the All-India Muslim League was authorised to adopt such course as may be necessary with a view to explore the possibility of a suitable alternative which will safeguard the interests of the Mussalmans and other minorities the President with the concurrence of the Working Committee hereby appoints a committee of the following gentlemen to examine various schemes already propounded by those who are fully versed in the constitutional developments of India and other countries and those that may be submitted hereafter to the President, and report to the Working Committee their conclusions at an early date :

(1) Mr. M. A. Jinnah (President)
(2) The Hon. Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan
(3) Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan Saheb
(4) Syed Abdul Aziz Saheb
(5) Sir Abdoola Haroon
(6) The Hon. Sir Kh. Nazimuddin
(7) Abdul Matin Choudhri Saheb
(8) Sardar Aurangzeb Khan Saheb
(9) Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan Saheb (Convener)."

Subsequently, the Quaid-i-Azam addressing a meeting of the League Council held at Delhi on 8 April said: That there were several scheme in the field including that of dividing the country into Muslim and Hindu India. These schemes were before the Committee which had been set up by the Working Committee of the Muslim League. He assured the meeting that the Committee was not pledged to any Scheme. It would examine the whole question and produce a Scheme which, according to the Committee, would be in the best interest of the Muslims of India.[1]

Thus, a partitioned India had now come into the realm of practical politics'.[2]

Early in the following year (February, 1940) meetings of the Working Committee and the Council of the All-India Muslim League were held in Delhi. The question of a separate homeland for the Muslims was seriously considered and it was decided to propose it officially at the open sessions to be held in March.[3]

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1 *Indian Annual Register*, 1939.

2 Manserah—*Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs: Problems af External Policy of 1931-39*, p. *356*.

3 Choudhry Khliquzzaman gives the following version of the proceedings of the Working Committee held on February 4, 1940 "………I pointed out to the members that recently Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan had published a scheme for the future constitution of India in which he had proposed division of India into seven different zones and had also provided for a confederal structure. Personally, I said I would suggest confining our demand to the separation of Muslim zones, *viz.* N. W. F. P., Sind, Baluchistan and the Punjab in the north-west and Bengal and Assam in the east aad would leave the rest to the Congress to deal with. At this stage Sir Sikandar who was sitting to the right of Mr. Jinnah started pleading for his confederal scheme and Mr. Jinnah opposing it. The discussion went on for about two hours

(Continued on page 19)

Two days after the meeting of the Working Committee held at Delhi (i.e. on 6th February, 1940) the Quaid-i-Azam met thc Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, and conveyed to him that the Muslim League in its open session at Lahore was going to demand the partition of the country.

THE LAHORE SESSION

Qaid-i-Azam's address

On 22 March, Jinnah delivered his presidential address in the open session of the Muslim League. "The problem of India,"he declared. "is not of an inter-communal character, but manifestly of an international one, and it must be treated as such." He pointed out that Islam and Hinduism are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality. The Hindus and the Muslims belong to two different religions, philosophies, social customs and literature. They neither intermarry, nor interdine together and indeed they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Muslims derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different, and they have differ-

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(Continued from 18)
when finally, with the concurrence of the members, Mr. Jinnah rejected Sir Sikandar's schemes and entered in his notebook my suggestion with approval." *Pathway to Pakistan*, (Longmans, 1961), pp. 233-234).

ent episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and likewise their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single State, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be built up for the government of such a State." He warned that if the British Government were really in earnest and sincere to secure peace and happiness of the people of this subcontinent, the only course open was to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into autonomous national States. He concluded that Mussalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation and they must have their homeland, their territory and their State.[1]

Authors of the Lahore Resolution

Just before the Session of the Muslim League, the Working Committee in its meeting held on 21 March 1940, had appointed a Committtee with Qaid-i-Azam and Sikandar Hayat Khan as its members, to draft a Resolution. Sir Abdullah Haroon claimed that the resolution was drafted in the light of an outline placed by him in the hands of the Qaid-i-Azam in the shape of a small memorandum in February, 1940.[2] Sir Sikandar, who had a hand in the drafting of the resolution, gives this version :[3] "I

1 *India's Problem of Her Future Constitution with Preface by M. A. Jinnah*, (Home Study Circle, Bombay, 1941), pp. 1-15.

2 Letter to the Quaid-i-Azam, dated 11 February. 1941, reproduced in Pakistan Issue. p. 75.

3 Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates, March 11, 1941.

have no hesitation in admitting that I was responsible for drafting the original resolution. But let me make it clear that the resolution which I drafted was radically amended by the Working Committee, and there is a wide divergence in the resolution I drafted and the one that was finally passed. The main difference between the two resolutions is that latter part of my resolution which related to the centre and co-ordination of the activities of the various units, was eliminated.[1]

Resolution before the Subjects Committee

On the 22nd March at about 8.00 p.m. a meeting of the Subjects Committee was held. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan placed before the Committee the draft of the main resolution for the Session. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan gave its urdu translation. As the members wanted time to consider the resolution, the Committee adjourned to the next day. On the 23rd the Committee resumed its sitting at 11.00 a.m. and after seven hours discussion, the resolution, with some alteration

1 A claim has been made that Mr. Fazlul Haq was associated with the drafting of the Lahore Resolution. In a letter dated the 13th October 1945, addrcssed to Muhammad Shahjehan Mr. Huq stated : "as regards Pakistan, I stand by the Resolution whose wording I drafted and which I moved in the Lahore Session of the Muslim League." His biographer referring to the Sub-Committee constituted by Muslim League at Meerut in 1939 writes: The Sub-Committee approached Mr. Fazlul Haq and entrusted him with the onerous task of drafting the constitution of the prospective Pakistan. He drafted the same and submitted to the Sub-Committee which approved it." Rab, A. S. M., Abdur See *A.K. Fazlul Haq*, p. 101,

No corroboration is available of these claims. From the reports it appears that Mr. Huq arrived in the meeting from Calcutta when the draft resolution was under discussion. He therefore, could not have a hand in its drafting.

was adopted. It is understood that a number of amendments were moved by the representatives of Muslim minority provinces in connection with the safeguards.[1]

The resolution reads :

"While approving and endorsing the action taken by the Council and the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, as indicated in their resolutions dated August 27, September 17 and 18 and October 22, 1939 and February 3, 1940, on the constitutional issue, this session of the All-India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the scheme of federātion embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, is totally unsuited to and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of the country and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India. It further records its emphatic view that while the declaration dated October 18. 1939, made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government is reassuring in so far as it declares that the policy and plan on which the Government of India Act, 1935 is based will be considered in consultation with the various parties, interest and communities in India, Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered *de novo* and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent.

Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Moslem League that no Consi-

1 *The Statesman* March 23, 1940.

tutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted *with such territorial readjustments as may be necssary that the areas in which* the Muslims are numerically in a majority as the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute "Independent States" in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign. That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specially provided in the Constitution for minorities in the units and in the regious for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in *consultation with them and in other parts of India where the Mussalmans are in a minority adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically*[1] *provided in the Constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interest in consultation with them.*

"This session further authorizes the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communica-

1 In the official publication called, *Resolutions of All-India Muslim League from December 1938 to March* 1940, published by the Honorary Secretary, All-India Muslim League, Delhi, on p. 47, the word used is "specifically". In some publications as for instance *India's Problem and Her Future Constitution*, the expression used is "specially". It seems that the official version is correct.

tions, customs and such other matters as may be necessary."

The words in italics were additions made in the original resolution.[1]

Dr. Ashiq Hussain Batalvi moved for the deletion of the following words:

> "that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the Norih-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute Independent States."

He suggested that the provinces of the Punjab, Sind, Frontier and Baluchistan should be specifically mentioned therein.[2] Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan intervened and said that the omission of the names of the provinces was deliberate otherwise the territory of the proposed state would extend only upto Godhgaon. He added that by using the expression "territorial readjustment," it was not intended to surrender any position of the Punjab and Bengal but to claim areas of Muslim culture like Delhi and Aligarh.[3] After this clarification the Committee approved the resolution. Subsequent events hardly justify the interpretation given by Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan. The above expressions were utilized by the Congress and the Hindus for exclusion of the various

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1 The *Statesman*, 24 March, 1940.
2 *Nawa-i-Waqt*, Lahore, 21 April 1964.
3 *Nawa-i-Waqt*, 23 March, 1960.

districts from boundaries of the Punjab and Bengal, which now form part of the Indian territory.

Resolution in Open Session

On the same day (23 March 1940) the resolution was moved in the open session of the Muslim League by Mr. Fazlul Huq, then Premier of Bengal. He said: "We have stated definitely and unequivocally that what we want is not merely a tinkering with the idea of federation but its thorough overhauling so that the federation may ultimately go." Seconding the resolution, Choudhry Khaliquzzaman (from U.P.) narrated the circumstances which had forced the Muslims to demand separation and their own government in areas where they were in majority. He blamed the British Government for starting the majority and minority questions and held the Congress responsible for the Muslim demand for separation.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (Punjab) said that for a long period, he had been an advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity and had been in the Congress for a number of years. During all this time he had found that the Congress was not at all anxious to acheive freedom but in fact wanted to suppress the Muslims. Sardar Aurangzeb Khan (N. W. F. P.) expressed the opinion that it was absurd to declare the Muslims a minority community when in four provinces they were in a majority. "Muslims are a separate nation. we want a home for the Muslim nation, our homeland is indicated in the resolution." Sir Abdullah Haroon (Sind) hoped that the proposal embodied in

the resolution could be acceptable both to the Hindus and the British as there was no better solution of the thorny problem.

As the time for prayers was near, the session was adjourned for the following day. On the 24th March the debate on the resolution was resumed. Qazi Isa (Baluchistan) assured his co-religionist in the minority provinces that when they would achieve freedom in majority provinces they would not forget them. Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan (Madras) declared that the Muslim League had been carrying on the fight for the freedom of India for the last 37 years. "In this struggle, they had cooperated with the Hindus in the hope that the freedom of India meant freedom for every inhabitant of the country. But their belief has been belied by the conduct of the Congress during its regime of two and a half years in seven out of eleven provinces." Mr. Ismail Chundrigar (Bombay) said that a Federation of the whole of India in which the Muslims would be in a hopeless minority, was entirely unacceptable to them. Dr. Mohamed Alam (Punjab) rebutted the notion that the scheme outlined in the resolution was a mere dream and felt confident that it would be turned into a reality. He added that the Congress did not want independence but a Hindu Raj.

Khan Bahadur Nawab Mohamed Ismail Khan (Bihar), Syed Abdur Rauf Shah (C.P.), Syed Zakir Ali (U.P.), Begum Mohammed Ali (U.P.), and Moulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni (U.P.) also spoke

in support of the resolution which was passed unanimously amid great enthusiasm.[1]

The Pakistan Resolution

The news of the adoption of the resolution was flashed all over the world. The *Milap* and other Hindu papers published it under the headlines of 'Pakistan Resolution' with, no doubt, an ulterior object. An attempt was made to create confusion by raising the cry Pak (pure) and Na-Pak (impure) states and by the bogey of pan-Islamism. The expression, however, caught the public imagination and soon became popular. Mr. Khaliquzzaman recalls: "The next morning the Hindu Press came out with big headlines 'Pakistan Resolution Passed,' although the word was not used by anyone in the speeches[2] nor in the body of the Resolution. The Hindu Press had thus supplied to the Muslim masses a slogan which immediately conveyed to them the idea of a State. It would have taken long for the Muslim leaders to explain the Lahore Resolution and convey its real meaning and significance to them. Years of labour of the Muslim leaders to propagate its full import amongst the masses were shortened by the Hindu Press in sarcastically calling the resolution as "The Pakistan Resolution.[3]

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1 Pirzada, Syed Sharifuddin, *Evolution of Pakistan*, pp. 298-306.

2 Syed Hasan Riyaz in *Pakistan na-guzir tha*, p. 57 writes that Begum Mohammad Ali in her speech referred to the resolution as the Pakistan Resolution. This has not been substantiated by any other source.

3 Khaliquzzaman, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

In the beginning Mr. Jinnah referred to it as the Lahore Resolution.[1] At the Delhi Session of the Muslim League, he recalled:

"Now one more thing I wish to say about Pakistan is this. There is a new propaganda. The latest argument I think is really very wicked, the most wicked of all. The argument is this—Mr. Jinnah is working for the territories in the North-West and East Zones "Pak" and the other "Na-Pak". I have heard this from several quarters—and I was thunderstruck. You know what false propaganda can do. I think you will bear me out that when we passed the Lahore Resolution we had not used the word "Pakistan". Who gave us this word? (Cries of "Hindus"). Let me tell you it is their fault. They started damning this resolution on the ground that it was Pakistan. They are really ignorant of the Muslim movement. They fathered this word upon us. "Give the dog a bad name and then hang him." You know perfectly well that Pakistan is a word which is really foisted upon us and fathered on us by some section of the Hindu press and also by the British press. Now our resolution was known for a long time as the Lahore Resolution, popularly known as Pakistan. But how long are we to have this long phrase? Now I say to my Hindu and British friends. We thank you for giving us one word.

"What is the origin of the word Pakistan? It was not Muslim League or Quaid-e-Azam who coined

1 On the 25th December, 1940, for the first time he described it as the Pakistan Resolution.

it. Some fellows in London,[1] who wanted a particular part of north-west to be separated from the rest of India, coined a name in 1929-30, started the idea, and called a zone Pakistan. They picked up the letter P for Punjab, A for Afghan, as the N.W. F.P. is known even today as Afghan, K for Kashmir, S for Sind, and Tan for Baluchistan. A name was coined. Thus, whatever may have been the meaning of this word at the time it is obvious that language of every civilized country invents new words. The word Pakistan has come to mean Lahore Resolution. We wanted a word and it was foisted on us and we found it convenient to use it as a synonym for Lahore Resolution".

Further light is thrown in the Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence of 1944 as to the origin thereof and the meaning it acquired. In his letter of September 15, 1944, Mr. Gandhi enquired: "Pakistan is not in the resolution. Does it bear the original meaning—the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan out of which the name was mnemonically formed? If not what is it? The Qaid-i-Azam by his letter of September 17, 1944 replied "Yes, the word "Pakistan" is not mentioned in the resolution and it does not bear the original meaning. The word has now become synonymous with the Lahore Resolution."

1 The reference is to Choudhry Rahmat Ali who coined the word "Pakistan" in 1933. (See his pamphlet *Now and Never*). The term Pakistan began its life as a cluster of initials artificially compounded to from the initials of Punjab, North West Frontier Province, (also called Afghan Province), Kashmir, Sind. and the ending of Baluchistan. The letter ' i ' in the transliteration of Pakistrn (پاکستان) is the Urdu short vowel which is placed under a letter. (Interseting to recall Rahmatali's Karachi speech, 8th March 1940.

REACTIONS

Gandhi stated that by passing a resolution favouring vivisection of India into two, the Muslim League at Lahore had created a baffling situation. According to him partition would mean suicide, and the two nation theory was an untruth. He declared those whom God has made one, man will never be able to divide.[1] He considered vivisection to be a sin,[2] a call to war.[3] By June 1947, however, Gandhi had veered round and blessed the partition. C. Rajagopalachari opposed the resolution, describing it at cutting the body into two, but later he realised the logic behind it and its inevitability.[4] Nehru and some other Congress and Hindu Mahasabha leaders were simply violent in their criticism.

Indian Press

The Hindustan Times wrote : "History has made Muslims and Hindus in India into one people, which even the ingenuity of the most ingenious constitution-monger will be unable to divide. To break up the unity of India is not to satisfy the ambitions of this community or that, but ruin the peace and prosperity of the people of this country as a whole. This is a solution which the Muslim community as a whole, will reject, whatever the League and its leaders do.' *The Amrit Bazar Patrika* considered it to be an absurd scheme. "If the Muslims cannot live as a minority

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1 *Harijan*, April 6, 1940.

2 Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, (Times of India Press, Bombay, 1952), Vol. 6, p. 107.

3 Kaushik, B. G., *The House that Jinnah built*, (Padma Publication Ltd., Bombay, 1944), p. 132.

4 *The Statesman*, January 23, 1942.

community under an All-India Government can they except the Hindus to live under a Muslim majority? What is Mr. Jinnah going to do with the non-Muslim minorities in the Muslim States? Unless he is prepared to make them magically disappear, he must arrange for an exchange of population with neighbouring Hindu States. Can millions and millions of people be so transplanted? We pause for a reply."

The *Statesman*, on the other hand, found Pakistan as a live issue. If India receives Dominion status, partition seems the inevitable result in view of the attitude which the Muslim community appears disposed to adopt. If that really represents their position, neither the Congress nor the Hindu Mahasabha would be able to hold them. There would probably be fighting, but in any case there would be partition. Mr. Jinnah is no religious fanatic. No hastily or willingly has he gone along the road that has led him to embrace the idea of Pakistan. If both sides will face realities and discuss them without passion Mother India can yet be saved.[1]

British Press

The Times held the Congress policy responsible for the emergence of Muslim as a separate nation, but disfavoured the Pakistan proposal as 'it would mean an end to Indian unity.'[2]

The New Statesman's reaction was that the Indians did not divide on the lines of creed but on economic

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1 Reproduced by Dr. Ashraf M. in *Pakistan*, (Adabistan, Delhi, 1940), pp. 100-106.

2 27 March, 1940.

lines and that communal division had been recognised and exaggerated by the white rulers for their own ends.[1]

The Economist contented itself with saying that it was foolish to suppose, as the Congress did, that divisions of race and culture, which had created fundamental political cleavages all over the world would in India be slurred over by denying their existence.[2]

The Observer appreciated that a new phase of the Indian problem had opened and read in it the implied warning that the Congress must revise its policy of 'a crude democratic consultation' for all India if it wanted other Indian communities to cooprate with it.[3]

For the *Manchester Guardian*, Mr. Jinnah, by getting the resolution passed, had 're-established the reign of chaos in Indian politics,' the plan struck at the heart of Indian nationalism.[4]

Nature gave a favourable comment. "Apart from the fact that the voice of a minority of some eighty million or more, sectional differences, for once, forgotten, cannot be ignored, it is based upon a very real difference in a cultural tradition, as every student of Indian civilization is aware ; for the Muslim tradition fosters democratic outlook, while fearing and resenting Hindu domination in an independent India, which

1 30 March 1940.
2 30 March 1940.
3 31 March 1943.
4 2 April 1940.

would from its immemorial tradition of caste be essentially oligarchic in practice. However impracticable the Muslim demand may be, no solution will secure the future of India in world affairs or internally which attempts to ignore or override these fundamental differences of culture and tradition,

Interpretation of the Resolution

The Lahore Resolution was subjected to searching analyses, and critical discussions and debates. The expression 'States' (in plural)[1] had been used in the Resolution some comments were made regarding the alleged ambiguity thereof, specially whether the resolution contemplated one or more Muslim States. Dr. Ambedker wrote : "It speaks of grouping the zones into 'independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign. The use of the terms 'constitutent units' indicates that what is contemplated is a Federation. If that is so then the use of the word 'sovereign' as an attribute of the units

1 Recently it has been alleged that the word 'States' in the Lahore Resolution was a misprint. Mr. Khaliquzzaman states that at the Delhi Convention of the Muslim League held in 1946, Mr. Abul Hashim had raised the question as to the word 'States' and Mr. Jinnah ruled that 'States' was a misprint. Recalling the proceedings of the Convention, Mr. Ispahani writes: "The Quaid-i-Azam said that the word 'States' was a mistake and had cropped up probably as a result of a typographical error. It was then stated that even the published records of the Central Office of the All-India Muslim League carried the word in plural. The Qaid-i-Azam replied what really mattered was the intention and not the word. In fact, he directed that the records be certified." The official records do not corroborate the versions about the alleged ruling of Mr. Jinnah. The context of resolution and the subsequent resolutions at Madras and Delhi show that the word 'States' was used in plural in the Lahore Resolution. See Khaliquzzaman, p. 344.

Ispahani, A. H., *Qaid-i-Azam Jinnah, As I know him*, (Ferozsons Ltd., Karachi, 1967), p. 144.

is out of place. Federation of units and sovereignty of units are contradictions.[1] Professor Coupland says: it could scarcely mean that the constituent units of the independent states were really to be sovereign, but that it did mean that the States were to be really independent.[2]

The Muslim League and its leaders tried to clarify the position. At the Annual Session of the Muslim League held in Madras in April, 1941, the Lahore Resolution was made the creed of the Muslim League and the aims and objects of the Muslim League were amended so as to conform to this ideal. It is interesting to note that the word 'together' was added after the word 'grouped' and the amendment reads :

> "The North-Western and Eastern zones of India shall be *grouped together* to constitute Independent States as Muslim Free National Homelands in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."

However, to remove all doubts, the Muslim League Legislators' Convention in Delhi in April 1946 adopted a resolution which clearly indicated that Pakistan was intended to be a single sovereign State. The resolution, *inter alia* provided:

> "That the zones comprising Bengal and Assam in the North-East and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind, Baluchistan in the North-West

1 Ambedkar, B.R., *Thoughts on Pakistan*, (Thacker Co., Bombay, 1941 Ed.), p. 17.

2 Coupland, R., *Indian Politics*, (Oxford University Press, 1944), Part II, 1944 Ed., p. 206.

of India, namely, Pakistan zones where the Muslims are in a dominant majority, *be constituted into a sovereign independent State* and that an unequivocal undertaking be given to implement the establishment of Pakistan without delay."

An authoritative interpretation of the Lahore Resolution by Quaid-i-Azam is found in the famous Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence of September, 1944. Below are given the questions raised by Gandhi and their replies by the Quaid-i-Azam :

Questions	*Answers*
1 Pakistan is not in the resolution. Does it bear the original meaning, the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan out of which the name was mnemonically formed? If not, what is it?	1 Yes, the word 'Pakistan' is not mentioned in the resolution and it does not bear the original meaning. The word has now become synonymous with the Lahore Resolution.
2 Is the goal of Pakistan pan-Islam?	2 This point does not arise, but still I reply that the question is a mere bogey.
3 What is it that distinguishes an Indian Muslim from every other Indian, if not his religion? Is he different from a Turk or an Arab?	3 This point is covered by my answer that the Musalmans of India are a nation. As to the last part of your query, it is hardly relevant to the matter of clarification of the resolution.

Questions	*Answers*
4 What is the connotation of the word "Muslims" in the resolution under discussion? Does it mean the Muslims of India of geography or Pakistan to be?	4 Surely you know what the word "Muslims" means.
5 Is the resolution addressed to Muslims by way of education, or to the inhabitants of the whole of India by way of appeal or to the foreign ruler as an ultimatum?	5 This point does not arise by way of clarification of the text of the Lahore Resolution.
6 Are the constituents in the two zones to constitute "Independent States,' an undefined number in each zone?	6 No. They will form units of Pakistan.
7 Is the demarcation to take place during the pendency of British rule?	7 As soon as the basis and the principles embodied in the Lahore resolution are accepted the question of demarcation will have to be taken up immediately.
8 If the answer to the last question is in the affirmative, the proposal must be	8 In view of my reply to 7 your question, 8 has been answered.

Questions	*Answers*
accepted first by British and then imposed upon India not evolved from within by the free will of the people of India?	
9 Have you examined the position and satisfied yourself that these "Independent States" will be materially and otherwise benifitted by being split up into fragments?	9 Does not relate to clarification.
10 Please satisfy me that these independent sovereign States will not become a collection of poor States a menace to themselves and to the rest of India.	10 My answer to 9 covers this point.
11 Pray show me by facts and figures or otherwise how independence and welfare of India as a whole can be brought about by the acceptance of the resolution?	11 Does not arise out of the clarification of the resolution. Surely this is not asking for clarification of the resolution. I have in numerous speeches of mine and the Muslim League in its resolution have pointed out that this is the only solution of India's problem and the road to

Questions	*Answers*
	achieve freedom and independence of the peoples of India.
12 How are the Muslims under the Princes to be disposed of as a result of this scheme?	12 "Muslims" under the Princes" : The Lahore resolution only confined to British India. This question does not arise out of the resolution.
13 What is your definition of "minorities"?	13 The definition of "minorities": You yourself have often said "minorities" means "accepted minorities".
14 Will you please define the "Adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards" for minorities referred to in the second part of the resolution?	14 The adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards for minorities, referred to in the resolution, are a matter for negotiation and settlement with the minorities in the respective States, viz-Pakistan and Hindustan.
15 Do you not see that the Lahore Resolution contains only a bear statement of the objective and does not give any idea as to the means to be adopted for the execution of the idea and the concrete corollaries thereof; for instance:	15 It does give basic principles and when they are accepted then the details will have to be worked out by the contracting parties.

(a) Are the people of regions falling under the plan to have any voice in the matter of separation and, if so-how is it to be ascertained?	(a) Does not arise by way of clarification.
(b) What is the provision for defence and similar matters of common concern contemplated in the Lahore Resolution?	(b) As to 15 (b), again it does not arise as a matter of clarification, for it will be a matter for the constitution-making body chosen by Pakistan to deal with and decide all matters as a sovereign body representing Pakistan vis-a-vis the constitution-making body of Hindustan or any other party concerned. There cannot be defence and similar matters of "common coneern," when it is accepted that Pakistan and Hindustan will be two separate independent sovereign States.
(c) There are many groups of Muslims who have continuously expressed dissent from the policy of the League. While I am prepared to accept the pre-	(c) The Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organisation of Muslim India.

ponderating influence and position of the League and have approached you for that very reason, is it not our joint duty to remove their doubts and carry them with us by making them feel that they and their supporters have been practically disfranchised.	
(d) Does this not lead again to placing the resolution of the League before the people of the zones concerned as a whole for acceptence?"[2]	(d) No, see answer (c)[1]

PAKISTAN DAY

The Lahore Resolution was proposed on the 23rd March and was actually passed on the 24th March 1940.[3] It was decided by the Muslim League to observe Friday, the 19th April 1940, as the day on which public meetings should be held to explain and confirm the Resolution. Mr. Jinnah issued the following statement in this behalf:

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1 Letter of Gandhi, dated 15th Sept. 1944, in Jinnah-Gandhi Talks (Central Office, All India Muslim League, Delhi), pp. 16-18.

2 Letter of Quaid-i-Azam, dated 17th Sept. 1944, *Ibid*, pp. 22-25,

3 A number of writers have stated that the Resolution was passed on the 23rd March, 1940. That is incorrect, The proceedings of the Sessions as appeared in the *Statesman, Times of India* and other newspapers show that the discussion on the resolution continued till the 24th March. See also Quaid-i-Azam's statement of April 19, 1940 quoted herein.

"I feel confident that the Muslims throughout India fully realise the paramount and vital importance of the resolution *passed* by the full session of the All-India Muslim League at Lahore *on March 24.* It was a red letter day in the future history of Muslim India and of the subcontinent of India. The Lahore Resolution has after the fullest and most careful consideration defined our goal in the clearest possible manner. "It is to explain and confirm this resolution that the Muslim League has fixed April 19 so that all the provincial, district and primary League bodies should hold public meetings throughout the country to express their opinion that no doubt should be left in the minds of anyone as to the verdict of Muslim India.

"I therefore appeal to every Muslim throughout India with all the earnestness I can command, to observe April 19, as the day confirming the declaration of Muslim self-determination and Muslim independence day.

"I feel that Muslim India is whole heartedly with us and will not spare any effort to demonstrate to the world that we have with all the solemnity set our goal in front of us and shall fight for it and are prepared for any and every sacrifice for its achievement and realisation."

From 1941 onwards, in view of the fact that the Lahore Resolution was presented and proposed on the 23rd March, Pakistan Day was observed on that date (23rd March) every year. When Pakistan

became a Republic, the Day was re-designated 'Republic Day.'

The importance of the Lahore Resolution as a constitutional document cannot be overemphasized. It was through this Resolution that Muslim India committed itself to the establishment of an indepen-ent sovereign State (Pakistan) as its final goal, and it was after its adoption by the Muslim League that the Muslim nation zealously started a movement to attain that objective.

CHAPTER IV

THE CRIPPS MISSION

India was involved in the Second World War, as in the First World War, as an integral part of the British Empire but without any regard to the wishes and sentiments of the people of India. It was one thing, however, to make her legally involved in the War and it was quite another to secure the real support and co-operation of her people. The Cripps Mission of 1942 was the culmination of the process of the attempts to win over the people. The Congress ministries after their installation in office were noted for the systematic suppression of Muslim culture and way of life. While the Congress leaders like Jawharlal Nehru and a few others expressed their disapproval of Fascist totalitarianism, the Congress itself had been practising fascist methods in its dealings with the Muslims. After the outbreak of the war it tried to blackmail the British Government with the techniques of non-co-operation and threats of *Satyagraha* into conceding its demands the principal aim of which was to establish Hindu majority rule in India.

Muslim India, under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, had already proclaimed to the world on March 23, 1940 that no constitutional proposal for India would be acceptable to them unless it granted the Muslims a separate

State of their own in which they would have the "opportunity to develop their spiritual, cultural, economic and political life in accordance with their own genius and shape their future destiny, at the same time allowing Hindus and others to do likewise".[1]

The Working Committee of All-India Muslim League meeting on 16 June, 1940 resolved that in view of the grave world situation, a satisfactory basis for close co-operation should be found between the Government and the Muslim League and such other parties as were willing to undertake the responsibility of the defence of the country ; the Working Committee authorised the Quaid-i-Azam to carry on negotiaations with the Viceroy on their behalf. Jinnah made tentative proposals on July 1, offering terms for Muslim co-operation in the war effort.

Muslim India wanted an assurance that 'no pronouncement of statement should be made by His Majesty's Government which would, in any way, militate against the basic and fundamental principles laid down by the Lahore Resolution for division of India creating Muslim States in the North-West and Eastern Zones ; that His Majesty's Government must give definite and categorical assurance to the Mussalmans of India that no interim or final scheme of constitution would be adopted by the British Government without the previous approval and consent of Muslim India.'[2]

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1 *Speeches & Writings of Jinnah*, edited by Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, Vol. I.

2 *Speeches & Documents on the Indian Constitution*, 1921-47, Vol. II, by Sir Mourice Gwyer and Appadorai p. 502.

The Viceroy's response was not satisfactory and the Muslims' offer of co-operation did not, therefore, materialise.

Thus a constitutional and political deadlock started soon after the War and there was little prospect of getting India's real support and co-operation in the prosecution of the British war effort. On the eve of the 'Battle of Britain', the British Government on 8 Angust, 1940 made an important announcement relating to India's constitutional and political deadlock. This announcement which subsequently came to be known as the "August offer" expressed the desire of the British Government to establish an Advisory War Council. With regard to the future constitution of India it was stated that after the war a "representative Indian body" would be set up to frame the constitution. The "August offer" however contained a significant pledge for the Muslims and other minorities. They were assured that the British Government would give "full weight" to the views of the minorities in any revision of the constitution and would not "contemplate transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submisson to such a government".

While explaining the "August offer" in the House of Commons, Mr. Amery, the then Secretary of State for India clarified the assurance by stating :

"The foremost among these elements stands the Muslim community of ninety million strong constituting a majority both in North-Western and North-Eastern India."[1]

This pledge with regard to the legitimate rights and aspirations of the minorities was most distasteful to the Congress. It naturally turned down the "August offer" and the Congress Working Committee asked the Satyagraha Committees : "to carry on their activities with full vigour". The Muslim League was willing to accept the "August offer" provided the following two demands were accepted :

First, the British Government must give a categorical assurance that it would adopt no constitution, wheather for the war period only or in final form, 'without the previous approval of Muslim India.

Secondly in any reorganisation for the purpose of mobilising India's maximum war-effort, Muslim India's leadership must have an equal share in the authority and responsibility of the Governments, Central and Provincial, if the Executive Council is enlarged, the number of Muslim members must be equal to that of the Hindu members if the Congress comes in, if it does not, the Muslims must be in majority ; the same proportions should apply to an Advisory War Council of any kind.'[2]

The British Government, however, did not accept the Muslim League offer of co-operation ; they prefer-

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1 Saiyid, M.H., *Mohammad Ali Jinnah Political Study*, p. 447.

2 Coupland, R., *The Constitution Problem In India*, p. 243.

red to by-pass the League, particularly, the authority of the Quaid-i-Azam and began to rely on "faithful allies" of the British Government. The Executive Council of the Viceroy was expanded and a so-called National Defence Council was set up in 1941. Some prominent Muslim Leaguers were included in the Defence Council behind the back of the Muslim League. The Viceroy's move was strongly resented by the Quaid-i-Azam and the League. This was a serious challenge to the Muslim solidarity and unity and thanks to the courageous and wise leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Muslim League emerged as a stronger and more powerful organization, for the Muslim League Premiers of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam resigned from the Defence Council in obedience to the decision of the Muslim League Working Committee.

Thus the British Government failed to secure co-operation and support either from the Congress or the Muslim League. The expanded Executive Council and the so-called National Defence Council could by no stretch of imagination be described as representative in character. The self-styled leaders who joined the Executive Council or National Defence Council had no support among the people. The British war effort continued to lack any real support of goodwill from the people of India. Since the failure of the "August offer" Mr. Amery continued to repeat in the British House of Commons the pledge of Dominion Status of the statute of Westminster variety, as soon as possible after the war. From the autumn of 1940 onward

Mr. Amery made a number of speeches both inside and outside the British Parliament but without any change of policy or of heart on the part of the British Government. So the constitutional and political deadlock continued without any prospect of immediate solution.

With the signing of the Atlantic Charter many Indians hoped that the principles underlying the Charter would be applicable to India also but the British Prime Minister Mr. Churchill made it clear in the House of Commons on September 9, 1941 that at the Atlantic meeting "we had in mind primarily the States and nations of Europe now under Nazi yoke". The extension of self-government in the British dependencies was a separate matter.

But the entry of Japan into the War radically changed the whole situation. The 'Indian problem' could no longer be ignored or postponed. The fall of Singapore, the British retreat in Burma and the capture of Andaman Islands in the early part of 1942 exposed India to an imminent threat of Japanese attack. Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, a prominent Congress Leader had made a dramatic exit from India to reach Germany and Japan ; he was preaching over the Japanese Radio the cultural affinity between Japan and the Hindus. Many Hindu Leaders also seemed to be jubilant at the prospect of Japanese advance upon India. Some Congress Leaders like Nehru, however, denounced the idea of India's liberation by Japan. Muslim India, it is perhaps needless to point out, showed no enthusiasm for Japanese invasion. There was general panic in the public resulting in withdrawals

from the banks and hoarding. The British Government, under the new circumstances could hardly afford to wait any longer. The United States Government, particularly, President Roosevelt, was reported to be putting pressure on the British Government for securing India's real co-operation and support in the war effort. After the disaster of Pearl Harbour, the Viceroy made an appeal for a 'United national front'. A policy of appeasement towards the Congress was apprehended and the Muslim League Working Committee had to warn the British Government[1]:

"The Working Committee, therefore considered it necessary to warn the British public and Government that any departure from the policy and the solemn declaration of August 8, 1940 and the pledges given therein to the Mussalmans would constitute a gross breach of faith with Muslim India and that any revision of policy or any fresh declaration which adversely affects the demand for Pakistan and proceeds on the basis of a Central Government with India as one single unit and Mussalmans as an all-India Minority shall be strongly resisted with all the forces at their command which would at this critical juncture among other things necessarily result in a serious impediment of the country's war-effort."[2]

On March 11, 1942, four days after the fall of Rangoon, the British Prime Minister Mr. Churchill made an important announcement regarding the British Government's new move to resolve the Indian

1 Sir Gwyer & Appadorai, *op. cit.*, pp. 517-518.
2 Coupland, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

deadlock. He declared : "The crisis in the affairs of India arising out of the Japanese advance has made us wish to rally all the forces of Indian life." He referred to the British promise of granting Dominion Status to India in the "August offer" of 1940. He further stated that in order to clothe these general promises and pledges, the British War Cabinet had made certain unanimous decisions for "the present and future action which if accepted by India as a whole would avoid the alternative dangers either that the resistance of a powerful minority might impose an indefinite veto upon wishes of the majority or that a majority decision might be taken to a point destructive of internal harmony and fatal to the setting up of a new Constitution".[1]

It was decided that Sir Stafford Cripps' the Lord Privy Seal and the Leader of the House of Commons, would proceed to India as soon as possible to explain the British proposals through personal contact and consultation with the Indian Leaders.

The announcement of Sir Stafford Cripps' visit to India was welcomed by the Hindu Congress leaders as he was regarded as their friend and sympathiser. It is recorded in Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's *India Wins Freedom* that Sir Stafford Cripps visited Wardha during a meeting of the Congress Working Committee and discussed with them the question of India's participation in the war effort.[2]

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1 Sir Gwyer and Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 519.

2 Azad, A.K. *India Wins Freedom*, pp. 46-47.

Referring to the visit of Sir Stafford Cripps the Quaid-i-Azam said : "There is fear that he is a friend of the Congress. He has enjoyed the hospitality of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at Anand Bhawan—that is all true, but we should not be afraid on that score. Don't get cold feet". He made it clear that Sir Stafford Cripps had come to India not in his personal capacity but as representative of the British Government. Jinnah, therefore, advised Mussalmans to keep patience till the offer of His Majesty's Government, which Sir Stafford had brought with him, was to come up before them. He assured his audience that if this scheme or proposal was detrimental to Muslim interests they would never accept it. He warned the Government against any attempt to suppress the Muslim League or create disruption in their ranks.[1]

Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in New Delhi for negotiations with the Indian Leaders on 23 March. It was evident to everyone that the two principal political parties in India with which British Government was expected to negotiate were the Congress and the Muslim League representing Hindus and the Muslims respectively. The Congress leaders, true to their technique and *modus operandi* tried to boost up the so called nationalist Muslims. Khan Bahadur Allah Bakhsh who had recently tried to organise a so-called Convention of the 'Nationalist Muslims' was brought to New Delhi and at the intervention of the Congress President Maulana Azad, an interview with Sir Stafford Cripps was secured for him.

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1 *Speeches & Writing of Jinnah, op. cit.*, p. 401.

It may be added that these so-called Nationalist Muslims had no supporters or backing among the people. They were creations of Congress machinations. Hence the real negotiation was with the Congress and the League, although representatives of other parties such as Hindu Mahasabha, the Liberals, the Sikhs, Schduled Castes and the Princes were invited in the discussions.

The British draft declaration which the War Cabinet had formulated and which Sir Stafford Cripps brought with him was at first communicated to the members of the Viceroy's Council and to the party Leaders. Subsequently it was released on 30 March, at one of the Press Conferences which Sir Stafford Cripps used to address after every two or three days during the period of negotiations. The British proposals contained two parts—one relating to the future constitution of India to be framed after the War and the other relating to the immediate present—namely, the setting up in India of a body to frame a constitution. It was hoped that this offer would secure India's association with the War effort. The British proposals were as follows :

(a) "Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities steps shall be taken to set up in India in the manner described hereafter an elected body charged with the task of framing a new Constitution for India.

(b) Provision shall be made as set out below for the participation of the Indian States for the constitution-making body.

(c) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the Constitution so framed subject only to :

(*i*) The right of any province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new Constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides. With such non-acceeding provinces, should they so desire, His Majesety's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution, giving them the same full status as the Indian Union and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down.

(*ii*) Signing of a treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body. This treaty will cover all neccessary matters arising out of a complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands; it will make provision in accordance with the undertakings given by His Majesty's Government for the protection of racial and religious minorities; but will not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in the future its relationship to the other Member States of the British Commonwealth.

(*iii*) Whether or not an Indian State elects to adhere to the Constitution it will be necessary to negotiate a revision of its Treaty arrangements so far as this may be required in the Constitution.

(d) The constitution-making body shall be composed as follows, unless the leaders of the Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities :

Immediately upon the result being known of the provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of the hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower House of the Provincial Legislatures shall, as a single electoral college, proceed to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in number about one-tenth of the number of the electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion to their total population as in the case of the representatives of the British India as a whole and with the same powers as British Indian members.

(e) During the critical period which now faces India and until the new Constitution can be framed His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear responsibility for and retain control and direction of the defence of India as a part of their world war effort but the task of organizing to the full military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the peoples of India. His Majesty's Government desire and invite immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the Counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. Thus they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India."

While explaining the British proposals, Sir Stafford Cripps, in a braodcast, claimed that the object of

the British proposals was "to make it quite clear and beyond every possibility of doubt that the British Government and British people desire Indian peoples to have full responsible government with a Constitution as free in every respect as our own in Great Britain or as any of the great Dominion members of the British Commonwealth."[1] Then Sir Stafford Cripps referred to the most crucial problem, whether India should remain united or be divided. As we have noted earlier, Muslim India had already proclaimed that no Constitutional proposal would be acceptable to them unless the Muslims were granted a separate State of their own comprising those areas in which they constituted a majority. While in the British proposals there was reference to the right of any province to secede from the Indian Union, yet Sir Stafford Cripps was at pains to prove his loyalty to the ideal of united India. The British Government still cherished the goal of united India which they considered would be the greatest achievement of British rule in India. We may quote here a few passages from Sir Stafford Cripps' broadcast: "The constitution-making body will have as its objects the framing of a single constitution for the whole of India that is of British India together with such Indian States as may decide to join in. We hope and expect to see an Indian Union strong and united . . . ".

As Professor Coupland had pointed out the British Draft Declaration of 1942 did not imply that

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1 Sir Gwyer & Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

2 *Ibid.*

Sir Stafford Cripps or his colleagues favoured the idea of Pakistan. To quote his words, "The British Government had clearly stated its objective as a new Indian Union to form a dominion under a new Constitution for India. No one can read the draft declaration without recognising that the non-adherence provisions were intended only as a means of preventing in the last resort a break down of the whole scheme for setting India free."[1]

Sir Stafford Crippss' justification in making the provision of non-accession of the provinces was that "if you want to persuade a number of people who are inclined to be antagonistic to enter the same room, it is unwise to tell them that once they go in there is no way out". It was clear from these utterances and statements of the British Government and its spokesman, Sia Stafford Cripps, that the legitimate aspirations of the Muslims and their demand for a homeland of their own were not treated properly or with sympathy. It would also prove the hollowness of the calumny that Pakistan was established with British support and sympathy or as a result of British policy of divide and rule. Pakistan represented the inner urge of the Muslims towards self-expression and it was achieved by the sacrifices of lives and properties of the millions of Muslims and in the teeth of the opposition of both the Hindu Congress and the British Government.

The Cripps' proposal was thoroughly examined and analysed by Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah

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1 Coupland, *op. cit.*, p. 522.

in his presidential address at the Allahabad session of the All-India Muslim League on 4 April, 1942.

With his usual sagacity and statesmanship he X-rayed the proposals clause by clause. The Quaid-i-Azam naturally stressed that part of the proposals which dealt with the future constitution-making as with it were tied up the hopes and aspirations of the hundred million Muslims of the Indo-Pak sub-continent.

Turning to the non-accession clause of the proposals which was vital for the Muslim demand for Pakistan, the Quaid-i-Azim pointed out "the most vital and the most important of all the points was as to how the province or provinces would express their will and exercise their right". But this important point was missing in the British proposal. It is true, however, that Sir Stafford Cripps had suggested that if the legislature of a province decided in favour of accession by 60% votes, the decision would be final.

However, if the vote in favour of accession was 59% then there would be a plebiscite of the province as a whole. With regard to the constitution-making body the Quaid-i-Azam pointed that all the members of the Assemblies of eleven provinces would meet together as one single electoral college and there would be roughly 1,600 members and they would be entitled to elect one-tenth which means there would be 160 members elected be means of proportional representation and not by separate electorates.

The Muslims could not expect more than 25% of the total seats by means of separate electorates and it

was difficult to forecast what would be their share under the proportional representation. The constitution-making body would be sovereign and to quote the words of Sir Stafford Cripps, it would start "with a preference for an All-India Union".

Further the decisions in the constitution-making body would be taken by simple majority vote which would mean that the Muslims would be far outnumbered and they would have no real effective voice or share in the making of the constitution. Hence the Quaid-i-Azam rightly said after explaining the Draft Declaration of the proposals, "I think I am echoing your feelings when I say that Muslims feel deeply disappointed that the unity and integrity of the Muslim nation has not been expressly recognised". He further stated that it had roused deepest anxieties and great apprehension specially with reference to the Pakistan scheme which was a matter of life and death for Muslim India. The Quaid-i-Azam concluded : "The document shows that Pakistan is treated as a remote possibility and there is a definite preference for a new Indian Union which is the main objective."[1]

With regard to the proposal for the interim government for the immediate present it may be pointed out that the British proposals were vague and indefinite in many respects. Details regarding many important points were lacking. Nor could Sir Stafford Cripps give to the Quaid-i-Azam those details as the Viceroy was expected to work out those details with

1 Sir Gwyer and *Appadorai, op. cit.*, pp. 526-528.

the political leaders, once the British draft proposals were accepted.

The Muslims felt that as the proposals relating to the future were unsatisfactory and inadequate, no useful purpose would be served in discussing the details of the interim government. Hence, in the negotiations with the Quaid-i-Azam, the proposals for the interim government figured less prominently. The Quaid-i-Azam was rightly concerned with the future destiny of the Muslims. He was, under no circumstance, prepared to sacrifice the goal of Pakistan for the sake of a few seats in the Viceroy's Council.

The Muslim League Working Committee gave most careful and serious consideration to the British proposals as brought by Sir Stafford Cripps. The Delhi negotiations on the British proposals began on 25 March and ended on 10 April. The Muslims after a detailed consideration of the British proposals came to the conclusion that they were unacceptable to them.

The Muslim League Working Committee passed a lengthy resolution on the British proposals. The Committee, while expressing gratification at the fact that the possibility of Pakistan was recognised by implication, rejected the British proposals for the following reasons :

(i) "The Muslims after 25 years of genuine efforts for the reconciliation of the two major communities and the bitter experience of the failure or such efforts, are convinced that it is neither just nor possible, in the interests of peace and happiness of the two

peoples, to compel them to constitute one Indian Union, composed of the two principal nations—Hindus and Muslims which appears to be the main object of His Majesty's Government, as adumbrated in the preamble of the Draft Declaration, the creation of more than one Union being relegated only to the realm of remote possibility and is purely illusory.

(ii) The Working Committee thought that it would be unfair to the Muslims to enter a constitution-making body whose main object was creating one Indian Union, adding "With conditions as they are, it will be not only futile but on the contrary may exacerbate bitterness and animosity among the various elements in the country". Hence, the Committee decided not to enter into such a constitution-making body.

(iii) The Committee pointed out that the right of non-accession to the Union as contemplated in the draft declaration was conceded, presumably in response to the insistent demand by the Muslims for the partition of India, but the methods and procedure laid down were such as to negative the professed object. Hence, the Committee resolved "The Muslims cannot be satisfied by such a declaration on a vital question affecting their future destiny and demand a clear and precise pronouncement on the subject. Any attempt to solve the future problem of India by the process of evading the real issue is to court disaster."

The Muslim League Working Committee resolution also dealt with the problem of Indian States, the

proposed treaty to be negotiated between the Crown and the Union or Unions and the Interim Government. The resolution of the Working Committee was released on 11 April after the negotiation had ended.

The Congress started the negotiations with the the British with the object of gaining complete domination in the sub-continent. The Congress, as the Quaid-i-Azam said to the American Press representative, Mr. Chapman, was engaged in political blackmail, taking advantage of the fact that the enemy was at India's door to attempt to force the British to agree to the so called national government in which the Muslims would be outnumbered by three to one and would be ruled by the Hindus as they were being ruled by the British.

Gandhi was opposed to the British proposals and it is claimed in Congress circles that this was mainly due to his pacifism and aversion to war. But it appears that the real cause of Mr. Gandhi's and Congress' opposition was the implicit recognition of Pakistan, though as remote possibility. To quote Maulana Azad "an even greater snag was the option given to the province to stay outside the Union. This as well as the solution of the communal problem suggested by Cripps had greatly disturbed Gandhiji. He had regarded the Cripps offer as totally unacceptable. He felt that it would only add to our difficulties and make a settlement of the communal problem impossible."[1]

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1 Azad, A.K., *op. cit.*, p. 58.

The Congress wanted an immediate *defacto* and *dejure* transfer of power. The Congress leaders were demanding the immediate setting up of a so-called national government. It is claimed in Maulana Azad's "*India Wins Freedom*" that at the first interview with the Congress leaders, Sir Stafford Cripps visualized an executive Council with the Viceroy as a mere constitutional figure-head and the Council exercising real power like a Cabinet. It is further pointed out by Maulana Azad that subsequently, Sir Stafford Cripps changed his views and expressed his inability to change the *status quo* during the War. Sir Stafford Cripps, however, denied making any such commitment as recorded in Maulana Azad's book. The Congress wanted not only an assurance or convention by which the Viceroy would normally act on the advice of the Executive Council but also statutory amendment of the existing constitution.

While the supreme authority of the Congress, Mr. Gandhi described the Britsh proposal as "a postdated cheque on a crashing bank," the Congress Working Committee recognised that future independence of India was implicit in the British proposal but added that the accompanying provisions and restrictions were such that real freedom might be an illusion. Among the provisions, the most distasteful and unacceptable to the Hindu Congress was the option given to a province to stay out of the proposed Indian Union. Even a mere reference to the right of self-determination for the Muslims or any other minority group was unacceptable to the intolerant and arrogant Hindu Congress.

While rejecting the British proposal relating to the future Constitution, the Congress Working Committee devoted a lengthy space to the non-accession clause. According to the Congress, "the acceptance beforehand of the novel principle of non-accession for a province is a severe blow to the conception of Indian Union and an apple of discord likely to generate growing trouble in the provinces, and which may lead to further difficulties in the way of the Indian States merging themselves into an Indian Union. Congress has been wedded to Indian freedom and unity and any break of that unity especially in the modern world when peoples' minds inevitably think in terms of ever larger federations would be injurious to all concerned and exceedingly painful to contemplate. . . .

The proposal now made on the part of the British War Cabinet encourages and will lead to attempts at separation at the very inception of the Union and thus create great friction just when the utmost co-operation and good-will are most needed. This proposal has been presumably made to meet the communal demand, but it will have other consequences also and lead politically reactionary and obscurantist groups among the different communities to create trouble and divert public attention from the vital issues before the country."[1]

So it is clear from the resolution of the Congress Working Committee which we have quoted here that the real cause for the rejection of the British proposal

1 Sir Gwyer and Appadorai *op. cit.*, p. 525.

by the Congress was the non-accession clause which recognised the possibility of Pakistan by implication, though, as we have pointed out earlier, it was not the intention of the British Government to favour the idea of a separate Muslim State. For the Congress, however, mere reference to the right of self-determination for Muslims was so detestable as to lead to reject the entire British proposal for the attainment of independence.

The Congress leaders tried to create the impression that the final breakdown of the negotiations took place as a result of the British reluctance to transfer the portfolios of defence to the proposed Interim Government. Sir Stafford Cripps, however, denied that this was the real cause of the breakdown of negotiation.

From the correspondence which passed between the Congress leaders and Sir Stafford Cripps as well as from the account recorded in Azad's book, it is evident that the Congress even after the rejection of the constitutional part of the British proposals, was willing to join the Interim Government if it were formed in accordance with its wishes. In their final letter to Sir Stafford Cripps they made two suggestions—first an immediate change in the constitution ; second, there should be a full national government consisting of Indian leaders and working as a cabinet without any control of interference from the Viceroy or the Secretary of State for India. It may be added here that Congress proposals were impracticable as Sir Stafford Cripps from the very beginning made it clear that no change

in the Constitution could be made while the War continued. Any change in the constitution according to the wishes of the Cougress would have prejudiced the entire constitutional issue in disregard of the pledges given to the Muslims and the minorities.

Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah commenting on the Congress-Cripps negotiations for an Interim Government said :

"If alternative proposals of the Congress were accepted—immediate freedom and independence of India, cabinet to be nominated by major parties with collective responsibility, the Viceroy to act as a constitutional head having no power to interfere—it would have meant the setting up of a Cabinet irremmovable and responsible to no body but the majority, which would be at the command of the Congress in the Cabinet. If such an adjustment had arrived at, then it would have been a 'Fascist Grand Council' and the Muslims and other minorities would have been entirely at the mercy of the Congress-raj.

Then to say that the future would be considered after war is, to my mind, absurd because there would be nothing left of the future to discuss, except details."[1]

The Cripps Mission failed as neither the Congress nor the Muslim League was satisfied with the British proposals. We have already analysed the Muslim views as well as that of the Congress with regard to the British proposals.

1 *Speeches and Writings of Jinnah, op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 417.

The Delhi negotiations were followed by a sense of frustration and disappointment in all quarters. The co-operation and the real help of the people of India in the war effort could not be secured, though the enemy was at the gateway of India.

After the failure of the Cripps mission the Hindu Congress leaders and the Hindu press reopened a powerful campaign both against the British Government and the Muslims. Even leaders like Gandhi and Nehru did not hesitate to join in this vile campaign. The Cripps Mission was described as a "state-managed show to buy off world opinion, to foist preconcerted failure on the people of India" and Gandhi began to preach that the vivisection of India was a sin. He also attacked the accredited leader of Muslim India Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah by saying. "I can not wait any longer for India's freedom. I can not wait, till Jinnah is converted, for the immediate consummation of India's freedom."[1] By this Gandhi tried to create an impression that the Quaid-i-Azam was opposed to India's freedom; in reality, what he was opposed to was not India's freedom of which he had been a doughty champion but the substitution of a Hindu Raj for the British Raj in India. While a Japanese invasion of India was expected, Gandhi also made statements to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bore no enmity towards Japan and that "if India were free her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan."[2]

1 Sayeed, M.H., *op. cit.*, p. 497.

2 Sir Gwyer and Appadorai, pp. 544-545.

Then the Congress finally staged an open rebellion by raising the slogan of "Quit India". On August 8, 1942 the All-India Congress Committee passed a lengthy resolution demanding the immediate withdrawal of the British power from India. Once India was free, Congress imagined that the Hindu-Muslim problem would be solved automatically. The Congress visualised a provisional government after the British withdrawal in which the Hindus would naturally dominate. A Constituent Assembly would be set up to frame a Constitution for united India. The resolution ended with an ultimatum to the British that if the Congress demands were not immediately accepted, a mass struggle on the widest possible scale under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi would begin. This struggle actually started on the morning of 9 August, 1942. Although the Congress preached the gospel of non-violence, the apostle of '*ahimsa*' and his followers had no moral scruples or hesitation in indulging in all sorts of violent activities. Trains were derailed, shops were burnt, property was damaged as a result of a Congress,' so called non-violence movement. The "Quit India" movement was nothing but a political manoeuvre to coerce the British to surrender to the Congress Raj. The Quaid-i-Azam characterised the Congress move as a manifestation of and 'angered desperate mentality'. No responsible organization or leader could approve of such large scale lawnessness and disorder at a time when the foreign invasion of India seemed to be imminent. The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League met on 16 August, 1942 to consider the criti-

cal situation arising out of the Congress movement and give a lead to the Muslims of India. It deplored the Congress decision to start a movement at that critical moment of India's history. The Committee also criticised the attitude of the British Government for appeasing the Congress which had produced barren and sterile results and had culminated in the open defiance of law and order. The resolution further stated that this movement was directed not only towards coercing the British Government into handing over power to the Hindu oligarchy and thus disabling themselves from carrying out their moral obligations and pledges given to the Muslims and other sections of the people of India from time to time, but also forcing the Muslims to submit and surrender to the Congress' terms and dictations. In these circumstances the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League after anxious and careful consideration called upon the Muslims to abstain from any participation in the movement initiated by the Congress and to continue to puruse their normal peaceful life.[1] But, as the Quaid-i-Azam pointed out, "Muslim India could not trust the British Government either. They were playing their own game." "Let them fight it out", he continued, "This is one of those cases where neutrality is the most effective policy on our part."[2]

Thus ended one of the eventful chapters of India's constitutional development and struggle for freedom.

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1 Coupland, *op. cit.*, p. 289.
2 Sayeed, *op. cit.*, p. 502.

CHAPTER V

COMMUNAL RIOTS

Since the beginning of the last decade of the last century, and especially since the twenties of this century, communal rioting became a regular, albiet obnoxious, feature of the political landscape in the subcontinent. Its genesis, motivations and immediate causes have been discussed in some detail elsewhere[1]; it would, however, be worthwhile to remember that the riots were a manisfestation of, indeed a sure index to, the mutual suspicions and implacable hostility between the Hindus and Muslims. rather than being the cause of it. No less instructive would it be to note that communal riots increased, both in number and intensity, in proportion to the political uncertainty.[2] And the period since the collapse of the joint (Hindu-Muslim) Non-Cooperation Movement was a period of extreme political uncertainty.

Since 1924, a series of riots had engulfed the subcontinent from one end to the other. The techniques of rioting had by then come to be perfected ; now,

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1 Qureshi, I.H., "Hindu Communal Movements", *A History of the Freedom Movement* (Karachi, 1961), Vol. III, Part I, pp. 240-75.

2 *Cf* "...This (communal) tension...is a manifestation of the anxieties and ambitions aroused in both communities by the prospect of India's political future...The coming of the Reforms and the anticipation of what may follow them have given new point to Hindu- Moslem competition..." *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission* (London, 1930), Vol. I, p. 29; See also p. 30.

streets were turned into battlefields where the two communities could cross swords. The founding of the anti-Muslim *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* movements in themselves expressed the Hindu extremists' desire and determination to make India "safe" for Hinduism. The protagonists of these movements felt that "for unity and peace it is necessary that there should be only Islam or there should be no Islam . . . Twenty percent Islam cannot be digested by any country", without being "troubled with stomach-aches".[1] Was not, then, the political future of Hinduism uncertain, if not in jeopardy ? Such thinking on the part of the majority community made, in turn, the twenty percent Muslim minority all the more concerned with and uncertain of their own political future. In the result, during the period under review, there was a virtual "civil war between the Hindus and the Muslims..., interrupted by brief intervals of armed peace".[2]

Even according to modest estimates, in about five years (1923-27), about 450 lives were lost and 5,000 persons injured in communal riots.[3] During the twelve months ending with 1 April 1927, there were 40 riots, "resulting in the death of 197 and in injuries, more or less severe, to 15,598 persons"[4]; in the next six months (April-September 1927) 25 riots took a toll of 103 persons dead and 1,084 wounded ;[5] the

1 *Al-Jami'at* (Delhi), 26 March 1925, quoting *Tej* (Delhi). See Qureshi, *loc. cit.*, p. 261 for fuller quotes.

2 Ambedkar, B.R., *Pakistan or the Partition of India* (Bombay, 1945), p. 175.

3 *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 27, para. 40.

4 Ambedkar, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 158.

following nine months (September 1927—June 1928) witnessed 19 serious riots, affecting every province except Madras.[1] The 22 riots during 1928-29 caused the death of 204, and injury to approximately 1,000 persons.[2] In Bengal, according to Ambedkar, 35,000 were abducted in about five years (1922-27) ; he also gives details of public rapes, assassinations and indiscriminate burning alive of men, women and children.[3] In Cawnpur over 300 persons were killed in a communal riot in March 1931 ;[4] in Bombay province between February 1929 and April 1938, there were 10 serious riots, stretched over 210 days and causing 560 deaths and 4,500 injuries. And in these gruesome riots, the Muslims were the sufferers.

During this period, the Muslims, weak and discouraged as they were, repeatedly extended their hand of cooperation, in an attempt to work out a joint political destiny with the Hindus, but, on every occasion, their offer was spurned. Indeed, by 1928 when the Nehru Report came to be formulated, the Congress had shed its masquerade of nationalism and become frankly Hindu in its policy, programme and thinking. That the Congress had been Hindu from its very inception has been attested to by both Hindu and British writers. The neo-Hinduism of Viveka-

1 *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 27, para. 40.

2 Ambedkar, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 176.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 167-68. 'Throughout Northern India,' remarks Ambedkar "communal relations had markedly deteriorated during the first two months of 1931 ...This state of affairs was due chiefly to the increasing exasperation created among Muslims by the paralysis of trade and the general atmosphere of unrest and confusion that resulted from Congress activities" (p. 165).

nanda in its many developments . . . [had been] the most potent religious influence in modern India, and adapted by the genius of Mahatma Gandhi . . . [had] provided the ideology of the Indian independence movement."[1] Indeed, the identification of "the national awakening with a revival of Hinduism", which was so characteristic with Vivekananda, Tilak, Aurobindo Ghose and others, "continued in the modern period, and was most prominent in the entire agitation and propaganda of Gandhi. In all of Gandhi's propaganda the preaching of Hinduism and his religious conception and preaching of the general political aims were inextricably mixed."[2] The Congress drew its strength from caste Hindus and its inspiration from Hindu history, philosophy, mythology. Its whole outlook and mentality had been essentially Hindu. And, with the years, the line of demarcation between the Congress and the Mahasabha had become exceedingly slender, thereby lending ominous significance to Maulana Mohamed Ali's warning in 1930 :[3] "His [Gandhi's] movement is not a movement for complete independence of India but for making the seventy millions of Indian Mussalmans dependents of Hindu Mahasabha."[4] Further, and more tangible, proof of

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1 Basham, A.L., "Hinduism" in R.C. Zachner (ed.), *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Living Feiths* (London, 1959), p. 258.

2 Dutt, R. Palme, *India Today and Tomorrow*, (London, 1955) p. 236f; for details about various (Hindu) influences in the birth of Congress, See Sitaramayya, Pattabhi, *The History of the Indian National Congress* (Madras, 1935), Vol. I, pp 20-22.

3 *Cf.* " . . . Indian Nationalism was dominated by Hindus and had a Hinduized look." "Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (N.Y., 1946), p. 353. Also see C.H. Philips, *India* (London, 1948), p. 134; M.N. Roy's statement in *Asr-i-Jadid*, 9 August 1937.

4 Coupland, R., *India : A Restatement* (London, 1945), p. 136.

this worsening development in the character, attitude and ultimate objective of the Congress came in the late thirties when it chose to form one party government in six provinces.

The Congress policy of systematically persecuting the Muslims and smothering their culture[1] could not but lead to augmenting communal bitterness and antagonism. Since the Congress was in power for the first time, and the Muslims were far from organized, the Hindus felt emboldened and in a mood to demonstrate their strength. Thus communal riots became more frequent and serious. In Bihar, for instance. as many as 72 incidents took place, in the United provinces 33, and an equally large number in the Central Provinces. Muslim religious sentiments were subjected to grave provocation : Muslim butchers were assaulted ; pigs were thrown into mosques ; *azān* was denounced and interrupted ; Muslim shops were boycotted ; and Muslims were prevented from drawing water from village wells.[2]

In this manner communal disturbances became a regular feature throughout the 27-month Congress regime in the provinces. This along with other measures initiated by the Congress regime in the provinces to de-Muslimise Muslims proved beyond doubt Jinnah's contention : "On the threshold of what little power is given, the majority community

1 For details see Chapter I.

2 For details see *the Pirpur Report* (Delhi, 1938), *the Shareef Report* (Patna, 1939), and Fazl-ul-Haq, *Muslim Sufferings under Congress Rule* (Calcutta, 1939) ; excerpts in Coupland, Reginald, *The Constitutional Problem in India* (Bombay, 1944), II : p. 187.

have clearly shown their hand, that Hindustan is for the Hindus. Only the Congress masquerades under the name of nationalism". He accused the average Congressman "of behaving and acting towards the Mussalmans in a much worse manner than the British did towards Indians". He also felt that "the Congress has now killed every hope of Hindu-Muslim settlement in the right royal fashion of Fascism".[1]

The Great Calcutta Killing

The next and the most deadly wave of communal riots began in 1946. In the 1945-46 elections, the Muslims had voted for Pakistan. It was, therefore, time to teach them a lesson for their audacity in demanding Pakistan. Such, in essence, was the significance of Sardar Vallabhai Patel's speech at Ahmadabad on 15 January 1946. Here, timed to synchronise with the Muslims' celebration of 'Victory Day' for the cent per cent League success in the central elections, "the iron man" of the Congress made the grim declaration : "The Muslim League has captured all the Muslim seats ... But Pakistan cannot be achieved in this manner. If Pakistan is to be achieved, Hindus and Muslims will have to fight. There will be civil war . . . "[2]

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1 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Jinnah* (Lahore, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 28, 70. For more details about Muslim grievances, see Chapter I.

2 See *Deccan Times* (Madras), editorial. 20 January 1946. Gandhi also seemed to hold similar views. He asserted on 28 September 1945 : " . . . if it [Pakistan] means utterly independent [sovereignty] so that there is nothing in common between the two. I hold it an impossible proposition. Then it means a fight to the knife." *Jinnah-Gandhi Talks* (Delhi, 1944), p. 61.

And the opportunity to translate that threat into action came when the League, in the face of Congress opposition to the grouping and limited centre provisions in the Cabinet Mission Plan, finally revoked its earlier acceptance of the Plan, and decided to launch, if necessary, Direct Action to wrest Pakistan. To explain the Direct Action, the League called for the observance of a Direct Action Day on 16 August 1946. It was to be a day of peaceful demonstrations and solemn affirmation,[1] but, thanks to Hindu designs, it was turned into a day of orgy and bloodshed from Bombay to Bengal. In Bombay, a Muslim procession was attacked. In Calcutta the Hindus fell upon a Muslim congregation in a mosque. This led to rioting on a large scale, since known as the Great Calcutta Killing.

Unarmed Muslim processionists were attacked all over the city and most of the Hindu majority areas became centres of death and destruction for the Muslims, despite the fact that a Muslim League Ministry was in office in Bengal. The official inquiry held later brought to light how Hindu police officers actually connived at the killing in these areas. Figures of casualties community-wise were not published by Indian newspapers but one must remember that Calcutta was a Hindu-majority city, less than one-fourth of its population being Muslim.[2] In addition, most of the Muslims were poor labourers who could hardly be expected to spend much money on preparation for rioting.

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1 See Jinnah's and Liaquat's statements in *Deccan Times*, 11 August 1946.
2 See Ian Stephens, *Pakistan* (Middlesex, 1964,) p. 127.

Impartial observers have since confirmed the then widely held view that the riots were sparked off by the Hindus, who resented the League Ministry's decision to declare the Direct Action Day a public holiday. "One of the causes of their resentment was that, up till now, the Congress had more or less possessed monopoly rights for imposing and enforcing *hartals*, paralysing the whole of Calcutta's transport, and for strikes, they thus strongly resented the prospect of any other competitor especially so formidable a bidder as the Muslim League, entering this highly coveted field of political exploitation."[1] Inflammatory speeches were delivered by Hindus and Sikhs. "... A prominent local Sikh leader in a fighting address recalled to the memory of the audience how in the communal riots of 1926 the Muslims had been soundly beaten. He announced that if rioting did start the Sikhs would back the Congress and between them they would give the Muslims a good thrashing ..."[2] And if casualty figures are any index, this threat, it would seem, had been made good.[3] The fact that the Direct Action Day was a Friday when Muslims used to congregate in the mosques and their homes are without protection in itself a proof that the Muslims could not have organized the riots.

Soon after, the installation of a purely Congress government at the Centre on 2 September 1946 turned out to be the signal for a new wave of blood-

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1 Lt. Gen. Sir Francis Tuker, *While Memory Serves* (London), p. 154.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 156.

3 For more details about the Great Calcutta Killing, see *Ibid.*

shed, arson and loot everywhere. Not a day passed, as newspaper accounts for the period would show, without innocent men, women and children being killed or maimed, and property burnt or looted. But, as later events would have it, this proved to be only a mild foretaste of "interim misfortune" under the aegis of the Congress rule. For, presently, these small scattered fires led to a full blown and deadly conflagration in Bihar where, according to a news agency report, the death toll was more than 30,000.[1] But this anticipates; for there was Noakhali in between.

Noakhali was an echo of the Calcutta killing. By all accounts it was a comparatively small affair, with a toll of about two hundred (Hindu) lives and enacted by the remnant slat Muslim boatmen who had suffered so heavily in Calcutta. The Hindu suffering was, however, mitigated by two redeeming features: village ties between the people of the two communities more often held the strain, and in many cases Muslim neighbours fought the attackers to protect their Hindu brethren. According to the European District Magistrate, "rape, abduction and forcible marriages were rare and no such cases had been brought to his notice."[2] And, then, as soon as the news reached Calcutta, a corps of Hindu correspondents was not long in reaching Noakhali. Similarly the League officials rushed to the scene. Rioting was

1 Estimate of the Orient Press, Patna Office : vide "Bihar Chaos", editorial, *Morning News* (Calcutta), 9 November 1946 (Dak edition).

2 Statement on 29 October 1946 : vide *Dawn* (Delhi), 1 November 1946 (Dak edition), editorial.

swiftly and effectively checked, the offenders were mostly apprehended and punished, and punitive measures taken.

Although "the total killed in this episode was well under three hundred", the Hindu "hysterical press" deliberately spread "terrible and deliberately false stories" which, in turn, kindled "in Bihar and the United Provinces, the Hindu desire for revenge. . ."[1]

Noakhali Day was observed all over Bihar on 25 October 1946. Huge processions led by Congress leaders paraded the main thoroughfares of practically all cities, towns and even villages, shouting the most provocative and abusive slogans such as "*Khun ka Badla Khun*" ("blood for blood"), "*Jinnah Ko Golī Maro*" ("Shoot down Jinnah"), "*Pakistan Ko Qabristan Banado*" ("Turn Pakistan into a graveyard"), etc.[2] Violent speeches were delivered at all Congress meetings. Thus at Patna, responsible Congress leaders like Murli Manohar Prasad and others openly exhorted Hindus to avenge Noakhali then and there. And the vengeance was not long in coming.

Bihar State Killing

The holocaust started from Patna itself and spread in no time to the whole Province. Armed with deadly weapons, huge crowds of Hindus went out all over the country, butchering men, women and

1 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

2 *The Bihar State Killings* (official statement and resolution of Bihar Provincial Muslim League on the Bihar Massacres of 1946), (Calcutta, 1947), p. 3. See also the speech of a Congress worker allegedly deputed by Rajendra Prasad at the Patna High School, Patna, on 27 September : *Suda-i-'Am*, (Patna), 9 October 1946 ; *Morning News* (Calcutta), 20 October 1946.

children, decimating whole villages—re-enacting their 1917 record[1] but this time on an unprecedented scale. Whole areas were destroyed. Fleeing refugees who stopped at the railway station were pulled out of trains and murdered in savage glee. Worse still, even the custodians of law and order or even those who made humanitarian professions, sided with the rioters. Several villages at a distance of only a few miles from the provincial capital and almost within sight of the Governor's house at Patna were besieged and burnt.[2] The villages of Manaura, Poonpoon, Taregana, Masaurhim Kaila, Chistipore, Palwalpore, Hilsa, Attasarai, Talhara, Banipore, and Mansurgunj—to name only a few—were within a short distance of their respective police stations—some of them only a few hundred yards away—and yet no action was taken for days on end by the police or the magistrates to save the lives and properties of the helpless Muslims.[3]

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1 *Cf.* "During the rains of 1917, when the rice fields were full of water, trouble broke out unexpectedly in the district of Shahabad. For more than a fortnight large Hindu mobs wandered over a tract of some 2,000 square miles, attacking, burning and pillaging Muslim villages and houses, retreating before the police through the flooded fields and re-forming for fresh outrages. Nearly 2,000 police and troops, infantry and cavalry, had to be poured into the district before the rising was subdued." Sir Hugh McPherson, "The Origin and Growth of Communal Antagonism, especially between Hindus and Muhammadans, and the Communal Award" in Sir John Cumming, *Political India, 1832-1932* (London, 1932), p. 113.

Says Sir Verney Lovett, "the brutalities practised on the unfortunate victims of these riots were the theme of indignation meetings in many mosques of Northern India, and collections were made in aid of the sufferers wherever there were Muhammadans." *History of the Indian Nationalist Movement* (London, 1921), p. 150. See also *Paisa Akhbar* (Lahore), 21 and 27 October 1917.

2 *The Bihar State Killings, op. cit.*, p. 3.

3 Syed Abdul Aziz, *Reflections on the Bihar Tragedy*, 25th October—31st December, 1946 (Patna, 1946), p. 7.

And while all this gruesome drama was unfolding. the Bihar Government made the astounding declaration that it would never resort to firing ; but that it would curb violence through *Prarthana* (request with folded hands) and *Bhashan* (speech) ! At the conference of Government officials, Congress and League representatives called to discuss the riot situation on 31 October 1946, the Bihar Chief Minister categorically stated that as long as he was the Chief Minister, the Government would never allow firing on the Hindu rioters by the British Army.[1] So that although the riots started on 25 October, the military was not called in till 1 November, and not deployed till 7 November. And what indescribable havoc could not have been wrought in those dreadful thirteen days ?

Indeed, in terms of sheer sadistic orgies the Bihar holocaust was terrible, revolting, blood-curdling. But, in contrast to the Noakhali affair, news were effectively blocked out.[2] It was days afterwards that refugees managed to escape to Calcutta and the mayor rang up Lahore to warn intending Muslim passengers against travelling via Bihar. Troops were sent, but it took some time to stop the riots. And it was a difficult job. The crowds were in an arrogant mood : they had their own people in power and often tried to snatch back victims from the rescuing troops.

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1 *The Bihar State Killings, op. cit.*, p. 4.

2 In an editorial entitled "Bihar" on 6 November 1946. *The Statesman* (Calcutta), alleged "Governmental interference with message transmitted".

"Of all the terrible doings of 1946", writes Sir Francis Tuker, "this fearful carnage was the most shocking. Its most dastardly side was that great mobs of Hindus turned suddenly, but with every preparation for the deed, upon the few Muslims who had lived and whose forefathers had lived in amity and trust all their lives among these very Hindu neighbours. It had never been ascertained who was the organising brain of this well-laid, widely-planned plot of extirpation. All that we do know is that it went to a fixed plan and schedule. Had it not been so, such large mobs,fully armed with prepared weapons, would never had collected in time and moved with such obvious, fiendish intent from victim to victim . . .

"The number of Muslim dead, men, women and children, in this short savage killing was about seven thousand to eight thousand. . .The atrocities committed were terrible and a foretaste of those to come at Garhmukteswar a few weeks later. Women and their babies were cut up, butchered with an obsence devilry that a civilised people cannot even conjure forth in their imagination . . . "[1]

This unprecedented barbarity which claimed about 50,000 lives and rendered one-half million people homeless found an echo in the British House of Commons where Sir Winston Churchill described it (12 December 1946) as being "only the first few drops of rain before the thunderstorm breaks", "a foretaste of what may well come in the future".

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1 Tuker, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-82.

Quoting reports from 'high and credible witnesses' he said that "Bihar has put into the shade the Armenian atrocities with which Gladstone once stirred the moral sense of Liberal Britain."[1] Even some Congressmen were shocked. Jai Prakash Narain charged the majority community of Bihar with commiting heinous crimes and deeds of abject cowardice and barbarity. What had happened in Bihar, he said , went "to the eternal shame of the Province and of the majority community" there.[2] Nehru could "hardly believe that human beings can behave so."[3] Gandhi's statement that "the murders in Bihar, both in number and brutality, eclipsed Noakhali"[4] was, however, an inexplicable understatement of which he alone could be capable of. Jinnah, on his part, condemned "brutality in any shape or form", but cautioned against "retaliation or vengence in the Muslim majority provinces for what has happened in Bihar"; he also appealed to "Muslims where they are in the majority, to do their best to protect and defend the non-Muslims and do everything that lies in their power to create a complete sense of security and confidence among the non-Muslim minorities."[5]

Sir Francis Tuker believes that the authorities including Ministers did nothing to stop the carnage. Strangely though, "the awful tales, mostly true, of

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1 Reuter, London, 12 December 1946. Also *The Eastern Times* (Lahore), 17 December, 1946.

2 *Star of India* (Calcutta), 12 November 1946.

3 *The Statesman* (Calcutta), 6 November 1946.

4 *Ibid.*, 7 February 1947.

5 *Ibid.*, 12 November 1946.

atrocities failed to move the Hindu Ministers. They could not, it seemed, be shocked.[1] "Even Gandhi who spent some four months in Noakhali, assuaging Hindu sufferings, but had no time to visit Bihar and see for himself the cruel depredations of his leiutenants, considered "the conduct of the Bihar Congress Ministry" as "both shameful and disgraceful".[2] The extent of official apathy is also borne out by the fact that the provincial Congress Government refused entry of Muslim leaders (such as Khwaja Nazimuddin, Muhammad Yunus and Syed Jafar Imam) into the affected areas ; nor did it concede the Muslim demand for the appointment of an inquiry commission under an impartial chairman (as had been done by the League Bengal Ministry in the case of the Calcutta carnage). Not only were most of the offenders at large ; but the Government also made every effort to destroy all evidence against the rioters[3] and make light of Muslim casualties. To quote one of many instances, a Bihar Government press note on 7 November stated that the number of casualties in Nagarnausa Chandi Police station of the Patna district was four to five hundred killed. Less than a week later, however, Bihar's Information Minister put down the death-roll at only 14 or 15 ?

Garhmukteshwar Slaughter

Less than a month later riots broke out in Garmukhteshwar, U.P. "Practically every Muslim man,

1 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 185.
2 *The Patna Times* (Patna), 29 January 1947.
3 *The Bihar State Killing, op. cit.*, p. 10.

woman and child was murdered with appalling cruelty . . . Even pregnant women were ripped up, their unborn babies torn out, the infants' brains dashed out on walls and on the ground. There was rape, and women and children were seized by the legs by burly fiends and torn apart. The hallions looted and burnt the Muslim shops, casting the dead and dying into the flames . . . The murderers' women stood about, laughing with glee at the burning booths, egging on their menfolk."[1]

"Throughout these days," writes Sir Francis Tuker, "the Hindus of Garhmukhteshwar town never lifted a hand to stop the savagery against Muslims nor raised a voice in protest against these excesses. The killings, let it be said now, stopped solely because the Muslim men, women and children were either dead or had run away."[2] To quote Churchill, "Indeed, it is certain that more people have lost their lives or been wounded in India by violence since the Nehru Government was installed in office four months ago than in the previous 90 years—four generations of men, covering a large part of five reigns."[3]

This widespread holocaust, failed to bring back the Congress leaders to sanity or shock their conscience. They were allowed to hold public meetings all over Bihar almost every week where they made extremely provocative speeches. For our purpose one

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1 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Speech, House of Commons, 12 December, 1946: Reuter, London, 12 December, 1946; *The Eastern Times*, 17 December, 1946.

excerpt would do—and this from a speech by a person occupying such a responsible position as the presidentship of the Congress. Speaking in the Bankipur Maidan, Patna, on 22 February 1947, Acharya Kripalani asserted : "The British are dead. Their power is fast decaying. It is no use whipping a dead horse. But we must fight the enemies within our own camp. We should not do any harm to the Muslims. But we must kill the Muslim League." When the League, as the 1945-46 elections had demonstrated, represented about ninety per cent of the Muslims in India, how could, one may ask, the Hindus kill the Muslim League without harming the Muslims ? The implication was much too obvious to be misinterpreted.

In any case, this was not left in doubt either, for long. The communal fire went on enveloping one area after another, one province after another. By June 1947 when the Partition plan was announced there was no province or region which had not been a victim of communal holocaust. The peace appeal issued by Jinnah and Gandhi together had some sobering effect, but, before long, it was more than offset by the bombasts of Hindu and Sikh leaders. Gandhi, for instance, declared as late as 31 May 1947 : "Even if the whole of India burns we shall not concede Pakistan ; no, not even if the Muslims demand it at the point of the sword."

The RSS

Pakistan was, of course, conceded—but only reluctantly : ine th hope that it would collapse before

long and beg India for reunion. From now on, destruction of Pakistan and extermination of Muslims became the twin objective of the Hindus and with this end in view, elaborate preparations were set in motion. The Fascist-style Rashtriya Svayem Sevak Sangh (RSS.),[1] a militant Hindu organization, which had functioned clandestinely since 1925, now began operating openly and on a more extensive scale. Dr. K.B. Hedgewar of Nagpur, who founded the RSS, regarded the Muslims "as malevolent enemies of Hindu unity."[2] "The basic principle that Hedgewar emphasized unceasingly in the training of his followers was 'Hindustan for the Hindus.' 'England is for the English, France for the French, Germany for the Germans and the people of those countries proudly say so.' This is the basic theme of "*We*."[3] *We or Our Nationhood Defined* (1939) by Golwalkar, the present Guruji, has been "described as the RSS Bible."[4]

The Sangh seeks political power, not to institute a definite economic and social plan, but to implement a cultural objective, specifically, to Hinduize India."[5] This objective becomes clear beyond doubt from Golwalkar's definition of nationhood. He defines "a nation as a compound of five distinct factors fused

1 For a penetrating study of this organization, its growth, objectives and methods, see T.A Curran, Jr., *Militant Hinduism in Indian Politics : A Study of RSS* (New York, 1951).

2 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 28.

4 *Ibid.*, On the authority of M.N. Kale, *The Most Reverend Dr. Hedgewar* (1947), p. 40. For extensive extracts from Golwalkar's political treatment, see Curran, *op. cit.*, p. 28ff.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 8 ; see also p. 10.

into one indissoluble whole : country, race, religion culture, language. Applying these five formulae, he concluded that the Hindus became a full-fledged nation thousands of years ago and still are one. The Muslim invaders, and later the British, ruled over India only for a matter of 800 years, and this period, which should be regarded as comparatively brief in the life of a nation, does not entitle Muslims to become nationals of Hindustan. They can only earn the right if they adopt the basic Hindu culture ; otherwise they can live only on sufferance, accepting the position of a minority which can have only such rights as are granted by the nation, i.e., the Hindus. This, he argues somewhat mistakenly, is in strict accordance with the rights of minorities under the League of Nations Covenant."[1]

This "sinister body" which "aimed at no less than complete Hindu domination over the sub-continent"[2] had, by 1946, increased its membership enormously, especially in Bihar, the Punjab and the United Provinces ; in the last province its membership ran into tens of thousands.[3] In the Punjab, it was "running courses in weapon-training, bomb-manufacture, acid-throwing and so on."[4] In early 1947 it organized "a rally of no less than 25,000 of its volunteers and the banning by the authorities of this

1 Review of Golwalkar's *We or Our Nationhood Defined* in the *Statesman*, 5 March 1948. See also Kale, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-6 : cited in Curran, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

2 Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

3 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

4 Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

meeting was followed by a storm of local Hindu protest and a *hartal* among Hindu shopkeepers."[1]

The Sangh's ostensible objective was to organize the defence of Hindus against Muslims. Prominent features of its 'defence measures' were the establishment of a secret service of women posing as Muslim ladies, boycott of Muslim shopkeepers, employment of hooligans on fat salaries and collection of dangerous weapons including rifles, bren-guns, revolvers, hand-grenades, daggers and spears, besides crude bombs made out of empty cigarette-tins. Huge quantities of petrol, acid and liquid capable of producing poisonous gas were stored at varions centres. In one small locality like Krishnanagar in Lahore, there were several dumps of rifles, guns, grenades and other ammunition. Handy stocks of ammunition, gelignite sticks, detonators and pistols were kept for immediate use with influential persons at prominent road-points.

It may be of interest to note that the Sangh was not a body of professional terrorists alone : its membership extended to all manner of people. Of the 3,200 regular and 8,000 temporary members of the Sangh in the Panjab, for instance, 40 per cent were students, 25 per cent shopkeepers, 20 per cent Government officials and 15 per cent purely goondas.[2] Nor were educationists excluded : a former Principal of the Government College, Lahore, was also a member

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1 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

2 Extract from a secret report of the Punjab C.I.D. published in *Dawn* (Delhi), 29 January 1947.

of the Sangh.[1] In the years prior to partition, the Sangh grew enormously. A rally in Delhi in December 1947 was attended by some 50,000 people, of whom about 20,000 came from out-stations, besides some 20,000 volunteers. No wonder, the "Sangh circles claimed that 5,000,000 Hindus directly and indirectly supported the RSS cause".[2] It, moreover, enjoyed "the open support of many responsible Hindu business leaders, as well as the covert sympathy of certain government officials."[3]

To wipe out the Muslims, the Sangh had planned with precision. It had prepared lists of all prominent Muslims, Government servants, Muslim League members, their families and their addresses. In some towns, every Muslim household was marked on a map, and members given training in blowing up houses.[4]

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1 A De Mhaffe, *Road to Kashmir* (Lahore, n.d.), p. 51.

2 Curran, *op. cit.*, p. 18; see also *The Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), 3 February 1948; and *Statesman*, March 6, 1948.

3 According to Curran, "Nationalist Hindus, the majority of whom had been Congress supporters, paid increasing attention to the progress of Hindu communal groups—the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS" since 1942. In a subsequent letter to Golwalkar, the "Guruji" of the Sangh, Sardar Patel, India's Deputy Prime Minister, wrote: "There is no doubt as to the services rendered by the RSS to Hindu society. In regions where their organization or help was required the RSS youths protected women and children and otherwise amply succoured them." Gangadhar Indukar, *Guruji-Nehru-Patel Correspondence* (1949), p. 24 cited in Curran, *op. cit.*, p. 17; see also p. 15. Throughout the partition holocaust, the Sangh not only enjoyed patronage of responsible Indian leaders, but its activities were even defended by them. It was outlawed only after the assassination of Gandhi when its complicity in the foul crime was established beyond doubt.

4 Mhaffe; *op. cit.*, pp. 51-2.

The Sikhs

Besides augmenting and equipping their own militant organisation, the Hindus also struck up an unholy alliance with the Sikhs. The Hindus decided to play upon the traditional Sikh antipathy to Muslims, and their ambitions in the Punjab : they held out the bait that if the Sikhs joined hands with the Hindus against the Muslims, the Congress would demand partition of the Punjab, and the Sikh dream of a separate state might come true one day.

There can be scant doubt that the Hindus wanted primarily to use the Sikhs in their designs to exterminate the Muslims. Yet another (and perhaps a deeper) reason was to claim the Sikhs back for Hinduism.[1] This latter motive of Hinduism, the Sikhs have realized only recently.[2] In any case clouded as was the Sikh vision by a pathological dislike of the Muslims, the entire Sikh community identified itself wholesouledly with the Hindu designs against the Muslims. At its meeting on 16 March 1946, the Shrimoni Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee passed a resolution in support of the establishment of an independent Sikh State. When their demands were rejected by the Cabinet Mission, Master Tara Singh, the foremost leader of the Sikhs, was particularly vehement : "We are already groaning under Muslim domination, which is now being strengthened and stiffened. We are doomed. We must now stand upon our own legs or fall for ever. Now or never.'"[3]

1 Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

2 Cited in A.B. Rajput, *Punjab Crisis and Cure* (Lahore, 1947), p. 47.

3 Mhaffe, *op. cit.*, p. 6 ; see also Master Tara Singh's interview in *The New York Times*, 28 February 1947.

Soon, the Sikh campaign against the Muslim League gained in virulence. In their public pronouncements, the Sikh leaders used strong language against the Muslims. On 4 March 1947, for instance, Master Tara Singh, brandishing his sword in front of the Punjab Assembly building, shouted, "The time has come when the might of the sword shall rule. The Sikhs are ready. We have to bring the Muslims to their senses."[1] "Our Motherland", he asserted, "is calling for blood, and we shall satiate the thirst of the mother with blood. We crushed Moghalistan and we shall trample Pakistan."[2] Other Sikh leaders spoke in very much the same strain: "This day the crusade begins", roared Giani Kartar Singh, on 4 March. "Our battle-axe shall decide if the Muslims shall rule."[3]

As against this sabre-rattling, the responsible Muslim leaders of the Punjab spared no effort to counsel peace and communal harmony. Considerations of space preclude the inclusion of extracts from their numerous statements, but the inquistive reader, may, in particular, be referred to the statements of the Nawab of Mamdot on 3, 4, and 6 March 1947, of Ghazanfar Ali Khan on 7 and 12 March, and of Malik Feroz Khan Noon on 10 March, of Mian Mumtaz Daulatana and the resolution of the Muslim League Provincial Committee of Action on 10 March 1947.

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1 See Master Tara Singh's Press Conference statement, New Delhi, 2 August 1965; also his statement of 8 November 1949, cited in Prem Nath Bazaz, *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir* (New Delhi, 1954), pp. 363-64.

2 *The Civil and Military Gazette* (Lahore), 5 March 1947.

3 *Ibid.*

Nothing perhaps brings into sharp focus the respective postures of the Hindus and the Sikhs on the one hand and the Muslims on the other as the joint editorials that appeared in their respective publications during this period. *The Pakistan Times, Eastern Times, Zamindar, Ahsan* and *Nawa-i-Waqt*, all of Lahore, carried the following appeal on 11 February : "We respectfully appeal to the Punjab Muslims in general and to the Muslims of Lahore in particular, to maintain perfect calm and abstain from all communal strife, whatever the provocation. Any attempt to provoke communal trouble should be countered, and should not be allowed to succeed." As against this, the members of the Hindu-Sikh press, comprising *Milap, Vir Bharat, Pratap, Parbhat, Ajit, Bande Matram, Jai Hind, Vishwa Bandhu* and *Hindi Milap*, in a joint editorial on 5 March 1947 had this to offer : "The League Ministry shall not be allowed to live. We shall consider it our duty to use every method to make such a Ministry impossible. We warn every man and we warn every force, be that the Governor or some other power, that their impious intentions shall flounder on the rock of Hindu, Sikh and Harijan (solidarity)."

In any case, these statements—and numerous other ones—were, by no means, empty words, as subsequent events gruesomely demonstrated. The Sikhs soon began intensive preparations for their coming struggle against the Muslims. A campaign was launched to recruit volunteers to the *Akali Fauj* ("the Akali army") and the *Shahidi Jathas* ("Suicide

Squads").[1] Master Tara Singh became the dictator of the Hindu-Sikh Council of Action in the Punjab and went on a flying tour from Rawalpindi right up to Calcutta, collecting Rs. 150,000 in a week's time. Students and young men were called upon to make a propaganda tour of villages and recruit as large a number of members as was possible for the *Akali Fauj* which now began to be trained in standard military fashion. By June 1947 its total strength was believed to have exceeded 10,000 men, deftly trained in the art of war. *Jathaband*. (organization on a militant basis) was started in several districts of the Punjab. A campaign was organised to arm the Sikhs with lethal weapons.[2] *Kirpans* (swords specially used by the Sikhs) and spears were collected in large number and steps were taken to manufacture explosives on a big scale. Rulers of certain Sikh states permitted their Sikh subjects to carry firearms without licence. The Sikhs contemplated the destruction of the means of communication and transport at a given signal, and instructions were issued to instal secret wireless transmitters in a number of important Gurdwaras.

The Sikh-Hindu combine was now ready to eliminate the unsuspecting Muslims. Almost hysterical

1 In an interview to an American correspondent, Master Tara Singh said: "I do not see how we can avoid civil war...The Sikhs have started to reorganize their own private army"...*The New York Times*, 28 February 1947: *The Civil and Military Gazette*, 1 March 1947.

2 Between March and August 1947, a total of 121 rifles and revolvers and 1,033 rounds of ammunition were recovered from the Sikhs. The corresponding figures for the Hindus were 13 rifles and revolvers and 218 rounds of ammunition, and for the Muslims 31 rifles and revolvers and 1,114 rounds of ammunition. The Punjab was then under Governor's rule. See *Note on the Sikh Plan* (Lahore, 1948), Appendix III.

was the tone of the Sikh leaders' speeches during this period. At public meetings, Sikh leaders dilated at length on the so-called tyrannies committed against their co-religionists by the Muslims in the West Punjab districts ; exaggerated acounts of these were given wide publicity. The Hindu Mahasabha "put it abroad that the Hindu religion was in danger, so all must rise and exterminate Muslims : that, for this, no sacrifice was too great."[1] "More and more the impression was becoming a certainty that whatever protestations politicians might make, the people of Hindustan would not tolerate Muslims as equals."[2]

"With the announcement in June that the Punjab would be partitioned," says Symonds, "it seems from the speeches of their leaders, such as Master Tara Singh, that the Sikhs prepared their revenge. Those living in the rich canal colonies of the West Punjab were to march out to the Indian border, causing destruction and dislocation on their way. Those in the East Punjab were to slaughter and expel their Muslim neighbours, in alliance with the militant Hindu organization, the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh."[3]

Part of this plan, as well as a plot to assassinate Jinnah, was discovered and reported to the Viceroy but in the face of incontrovertible evidence he refused, at the instance of Patel, to put Master Tara Singh and his colleagues under arrest.[4]

1 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 341.
2 *Ibid.*
3 Richard Symonds, *The Making of Pakistan* (London, 1950), pp. 81-82.
4 John Connel, *Auchinleck* (London, 1959), p. 904.

The Masscre begins

The stage was now set for the mass killing of Muslims. The first sketchy reports came about 4 or 5 August from the remotor rural parts of the Central Punjab. "Systematic attacks of a novel type were being made on Muslim villages by roving bands of Sikhs, usually on horseback, and operating under what looked like military discipline." It began with Jhand on 31 July, followed by attacks "with increasing rapidity and on a large scale'' at other places, but mainly in Amritsar district.[1] According to a British observer, "gangs led by ex-soldiers and armed with automatic guns, rifles and bombs were roaming the countryside, attacking and burning villages and massacring their inhabitants. It was estimated that, in the Amritsar district alone, nearly 1,000 people were killed during the first fortnight of August.''[2] Then came the turn of Manjha, the key Sikh area which lies south of Lahore and Amritsar and where ferocity reached its peak, between 140 and 170 a day reported killed both sides.''[3] After a few days "the gangs began to concentrate their attention on those who could not hit back, and resorted to the murder of unarmed citizens, to rape, abduction and arson.''[4]

New Delhi however appeared to ignore all this. "... The truth is that, despite all the warning, leading public figures in Delhi quite failed, for ten days or so,

1 Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

2 Lumby, E.W.R., *The Transfer of Power in India*, 1945-47 (London, 1954), p. 187-88.

3 Cannel, *op. cit.*, p. 904.

4 *Ibid.*, see also Rees Report cited in *Ibid.*, p. 912.

to grasp the significance of the news gruesomely pouring in from the Central Punjab . . . "[1]

Butchery in the Sikh States

More gruesome was the picture in the Sikh and Hindu States in East Punjab and around Delhi; there, the Muslims were either wiped off or hounded out. Immediately after the announcement of the June 3 plan, a campaign for the extermination of Muslims was launched in the Hindu States of Bharatpur and Alwar, which presently spread to Gwalior as well. It was not a communal flare-up ; it was, on the other hand, a calculated action organized by the rulers to massacre Muslims in cold blood in order to rid these states of Muslim population.

Synchronising with the attacks on Muslims in Amritsar and other places in East Punjab, the Maharaja of Patiala,[2] according to a Bombay weekly, organzied on 1 August 1947 a campaign of genocide against the Muslim population in the East Punjab States. "Some estimates are that, during the six or seven weeks, between August 1 to September 30 at least one hundred thousand members of the minority community"—i.e., Muslims—"were killed. Scores of thousands had to flee for their lives ; thousands of others were driven out through other means and their

1 Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 180 See also Nehru's confessian about the Indian Government's ignorance in *The Times* (London), 15 September 1947, p. 3 : 5.

2 According to the *Yorkshire Post*, " it is believed by some that ultimately the Sikhs, who have never forgotten the glory of their great prince Ranjit Singh, "The Lion of the Punjab", will coalesce round the personality of the Maharajah of Patiala to form an independent kingdom. *Yorkshire Post*, 3 September 1947.

properties were made over to the close relatives and supporters of the rulers.''[1]

Againas in the East Punjab, most of the young women were abducted. And Attempts at forcible conversion were systematic and widespread. And "Particulaly sickening are the reports of armed detachments of the State forces repeatedly participating with Hindu mobs in determined onslaughts against Meo villages.''[2] Tuker speaks of "armed mobs of Hindus, many carrying shotguns,...moving from place to place while State troops made no effort to stop them, and from village to village, setting villages and crops on fire without interference by State troops...Worse than that, State forces were seen leading, and mixed with, these Hindu arson gangs.''[3] "Air reconnaisance reports showed that State troops were employed in these ghastly massacres in conjunction with armed Hindu mobs who were allowed to kill and mutilate Muslim men, women and children."[4]

In this manner, the Muslim population in the States of Alwar, Bharatpur, Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, and Kapurthala was almost exterminated.

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1 *The People's Age* (Bombay), 27 September 1947. The Weekly is edited by a Hindu.

2 Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 188. It is interesting to note that the Maharajah of Alwar presided over a meeting on 30 June 1947 at which the RSS chief, Golwalkar, spoke. He pleaded that "in our country rule by kings alone has proved successful..." (*People's Age*, 15 February 1948). This fact established beyond doubt that there was collaboration between the Sangh and the Alwar authorities.

3 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 329. For more details, see *Ibid.*, p. 495 and L.F. Lovely Prior, *Punjab Preluda* (London, 1952), p. 179.

According to the 1941 census, Patiala had 436,539 Muslims; Nabha 70,373; Jind 50,972; Faridkot 61,352; and Kapurthala 213,754 Muslims. In Kapurthala, the Muslims, moreover, were in a majority and constituted 56.5 per cent of the total population. But by the end of 1947 there was not a single Muslim left in Kapurthala. In Patiala, according to a conservative estimate, the number of Muslims liquidated came to about 250,000 and in Nabha to 50,000.[1]

East Punjab Massacres

The dawn of 15 August saw the East Punjab plunged into the chaos of an undeclared civil war. "......By August 17, the province was cut off from Delhi except by air; by the 20th, there was said to be scarcely a (Muslim) village between Lahore and Amritsar which had not been burnt and its inhabitants exterminated or forced to flee . . . The Sikhs seemed bent upon clearing the East Punjab of Muslims, at whatever cost in atrocities and devastation . . . "[2] According to a British correspondent, "this violence has been organised from the highest level of Sikh leadership, and it is being done systematically, sector by sector. Some large towns, like Amritsar and Jullundur, are now quieter, because there are no Muslims

1 See Mian Iftikharuddin's statement, *The Light* (Lahore), 8 October 1947. A Congress stalwart till 1945, Iftikharuddin was then the Minister for Refugees in the West Punjab Government.

2 Lumby, *op. cit.*, p. 188 The grim threat of Master Tara Singh, it seemed, was being implemented with a vengeance. The veteran Sikh leader had told *The New York Times* correspondent as early as February 1947: "The Sikhs had the ability to keep the Muslims out of the Eastern Punjab. But why should we stop there ? We would drive them out of the Punjab entirely." *The New York Times*, 28 February 1947 : *The Civil & Military Gazette*, 1 March 1947.

left. In a two hours' air reconnaissance of the Jullundur district at the week-end I must have seen 50 villages aflame." No wonder, Morrison described the East Punjab scene as being "more horrible than anything we saw during the war."[1]

The Sikhs and Hindus did not spare even the refugee trains and convoys moving in the direction of Pakistan. The trains were attacked by armed gangs as soon as they left the station and the passengers slaughtered *en masse.* A hair-raising account of the atrocities committed on the inmates of a refugee train on its way to Pakistan has been given by D.F. Karaka, then correspondent for *Bombay Chronicle* and now Editor of *The Current* (a Bombay weekly); "I saw this train the next morning when it had been shunted into the safety of Amritsar station, where it was heavily guarded. The stench on the platform was so obnoxious, that even the sentries had permanent pads on their noses. Compartment people had been butchered by the armed mob. Those who survived—some four or five hundred—were just lucky. When I saw them they were on the platform too dazed to speak. Some were

2 Ian Morrison's despatch from Jullundur, dated 24 August 1947. *The Times* (London), 25 August 1947. See the story on the Jullundur massacre by another foreign correspondent : "Town Sacked as Muslims Go : Sikhs run riot with fire and sword", *Daily Telegraph* (London), 22 August 1947, p. 5. The correspondent calls Jullundur, "once a clean, bright town" as "a city of the dead, covered with the pall of smoke when I visited it today." It is interesting to note that the Muslims (120,000) formed the majority of Jullundur's 200,000 people.

The special correspondent of *The Times* (London) in a cable dated 30 August 1947, said *inter alia* : "According to the best neutral sources, no fewer than 10,000 Muslims have lost their lives in the Amritsar district alone during this month" (August)-

not even conscious they were weeping. It was a horrible sight. Blood flowed from the carriages on to the platform. Men, women and children lay dead huddled in the most ghastly positions, soaking in blood with heads cracked and stomachs ripped open or pierced. The fury of the killers made no distinction . . . "[1]

The orgies committed in the Eastern Punjab "gave rise to inevitable repercussions in the West Punjab";[2] but, fortunately for both Pakistan and the anguished humanity, the riots there were nothing as compared to those on the Indian side. "I visited Pakistan on two occasions," writes Tuker, "and had long discussions with officers working in this area. There is no doubt whatsoever that the Sikhs of East Punjab are far more vindictive; they take every opportunity of derailing trains and attacking convoys with swords and spears which the civil authorities have not got the guts to confiscate. The attacks that are taking place on Sikh and Hindu convoys in West Punjab are more in the form of a reprisal for attacks taking place on Muslim convoys in East Punjab."[3] "The fiendishly low standard of conduct was first set by the Sikhs and that it was only after some weeks that Muslims in Western Pakistan began to get down to their level. All our information went to prove this.

1 Karaka, D. F., "Freedom Must Not Stink", reprinted in *The Current* (Bombay), DFK Supplement, 30 November 1963, p. 28. For other accounts on the refugee trains, see *Daily Express* (London), 25 September 1947, and the *Daily Telegraph* (London). 25 August 1947; the latter one by Major R. Major. former Political Officer, Khasi States.

2 Connel *op. cit.*, p. 911.

3 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 489.

It did only harm when important men of the Indian Union referred to the atrocities in the West Punjab[1] and said that things in East Punjab were better than in the West. Had they concentrated their wordy onslaught upon their own people and cursed them for their savagery, far more good would have been done."[2]

On the other hand, at the height of the crisis Jinnah called upon his fellow Pakistanis not "to besmear and tarnish this greatest achievement of Pakistan . . . by resorting to frenzy, savagery, and butchery." "This is not the moment to go into the origin or cause of all that is happening or to apportion blame as to which community has disgraced itself more. It will be for the historians to give their verdict.

1 For instance, Sardar Patel and Pandit Nehru. While Jinnah was calling upon "the Muslims to temper their sentiments with reason and to beware of the dangers which may overwhelm their newly won state should they allow their feelings of the moment to gain mastry over their actions" (*Dawn*, 25 August 1947), Nehru was trying to find alibis for the East Punjab massacres: "past history will not be complementary to many of those who are condemning people in Eastern Punjab," he said: As against the communique issued by the Punjab Boundary Force on 28 August and the eye-witness accounts circulated by the Indian-controlled Associated Press of India the same day, Pandit Nehru tried to make light of the East Punjab situation, and blamed the foreign correspondents in India of "abusing hospitality" (*Dawn*, editorial), "New Delhi's Irresponsibilities", 29 August 1947 ; also *The Times* (London), 15 September 1947, p. 3: 5. (All references to *Dawn* after 15 August 1947 are to its Karachi edition.)

And indeed they had : for, had they not told the truth about the Punjab massacres, the naked, bitter truth, unpalatable from the Indian viewpoint, of course. How could, for instance, Ian Morrison's story cited above square up with the Indian code of foreign correspondent's conduct ? Even so when the ugly sights in Delhi in the following September at last stirred his conscience Nehru himself "confessed that, to start with his Government underestimated the trouble in the Punjab" (*The Times* (London), 15 September 1947, p. 3 : 5), but, then, it was too late : the mischief had been done.

2 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

Humanity cries aloud against this shameful conduct and the deeds that have been committed."[1] Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Pakistan's Refugee Minister, who was touring West Pakistan to curb the spirit of revenge and retaliation, demanded wherever he went a solemn undertaking from the Muslims to protect the lives and properties of the Hindus and the Sikhs amidst them, and this undertaking was freely given everywhere.[2] For one thing, the Pakistani leaders desired to set an example in respect of the protection and security of the minorities in Pakistan to induce India into giving comparable protection to the harassed Muslim minority ; for another they were interested in the Hindus and Sikhs remaining in Pakistan for the simple reason that their migration *en masse* would cause a serious dislocation in the economic life of the country since the Hindus and the Sikhs manned most of the trade and industry in Pakistan as also the administration.

But all these came to no avail. The bloody massacre in East Punjab did not cease. There was also a complete breakdown of administration in East Punjab.[3] To make things all the worse, the Army as well became increasingly partisan. According to Maulana Azad, "Lord Mountbatten said to me more in sorrow than in anger that Indian members of the Army wanted to take part in killing Muslims in East Punjab but the British officers restrained

1 Quaid-i-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah, *Speeches* (Karachi, n.d., 1963), pp. 32, 33-4,

2 *Dawn*, 9 September 1947.

Connell, *op.cit.*, p. 922. See also Karaka, *loc. cit.*.

them with great difficulty."[1] Amidst all this turmoil and carnage, amidst all this enveloping gloom, however, the one ray of hope, was the Punjab Boundry Force under General Rees ; amidst this engulfing flood of fire and slaughter, it was "the one rock standing firm." Bold and resolute were its efforts to prevent the spilling of innocent blood ; sincerity and a single-minded devotion informed its performance of the tremendous task that fell to its lot. Terrible as the situation, extensively large as the area of its operation, and meagre as its strength was, it did all it could within its power to check, across wide areas, the slaughter and terror and bring peace. Probably for this very reason a demand was set a foot for the disbandment of this impartial force, and thanks to Mountbatten's partiality to the Indian viewpoint, it was done not long after.[2]

According to reliable estimates, of the total Muslim population of 5.935 million in East Punjab and States, 5.193 million migrated to West Punjab. The number of those killed ran into half a million.[3] Certain areas were completely cleared of Muslims. The then East Punjab Governor, Mr. Chandu Lal Trivedi, disclosed, that not a single Muslim had been left in the Jullundur Division.[4] The same was true of Ambala Division. "I never thought a day would come when I would not see a single Muslim in a major city of

1 Azad, Abul Kalam, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 202.

2 Connel, *op. cit.*, p. 908ff.

3 See *Note on Loss of Muslim Life due to Disturbances in East Punjab and States*, (Lahore, 1948).

4 *The Light*, 8 December 1947.

India," writes Karaka. "That day has come now. For there is no Muslim in Amritsar today, except for certain Army personnel, heavily guarded . . ."[1]

Slaughter in Delhi

The fiendish flame that was systematically reducing to a cinder the Muslims in Eastern Punjab and Sikh States presently moved southward and eastward. In early September, the Hindus turned upon the Muslims with equal ferocity in Delhi. The New Delhi correspondent of *The Times* wrote on 6 September: "No day passes without stabbing and shooting outrages of which Moslems are invariably the victims. There are frequent instances of houses occupied by Moslems being forcibly seized by Hindus and Sikh refugees". According to a despatch in *Yorkshire Post*, "In Delhi today Moslems are terror-stricken. There is no escape for them into Pakistan by train, for railway travel for Muslims through East Punjab is fraught with the gravest risks because of the frequent hold-ups of the trains by armed gangs of Sikhs and Hindus on the look-out for Muslim victims. In Delhi the most revolting crimes are commited almost daily against Muslims".[2]

The Yorkshire Post wrote three weeks later: "Even in Delhi, the seat of the Congress Government, where of all places order should be kept, thousands of Muslims stay in the misery of refugee camps because they dare not return to their homes. No

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1 Karaka, *loc. cit.*, p. 29.

2 *Yorkshire Post*, 6 September 1947 ; cited in *Dawn*, 8 September, 1947.

impartial observer can doubt that the massacre was started by the violence of the Sikhs whom the Hindu Government could not or would not restrain."[1] "The whole of Pahargunj [an entirely Muslim locality] was in flames", wrote a European who visited Delhi during those terrible days. "In Qarolbagh every Muslim house has been looted...Everywhere I saw carloads and lorry-loads of armed Sikhs freely going round. Where they get the lorries, their cars and their petrol pumps ?. . . I saw no sign that the Government were functioning.' '[2] The *Daily Express* correspondent in Delhi estimated the number of people fighting in the burning streets of old Delhi as 500,000 with a further 100,000 rioting in New Delhi. He described Delhi's outbreak as threatening to become India's "worst riot" in which no one knew the extent of casualties.[3] "At one stage." wrote the Indian Education Minister, "the situation in these [Muslim] areas became so bad that no Muslim householder could go to sleep at night with the confidence that he would be alive next morning."[4]

According to well informed sources, the massacres in Delhi were organised on scientific lines. "It is certain," wrote Desmond Young, "that the massacre of the Muslims in Delhi in September was the result of a carefully organised Sikh conspiracy and it was not, as the Hindu press tried to make out, a spon-

1 *Yorkshire Post*, 27 September 1947.
2 "An eye witness Accouut by a European", *Dawn*, 9 September 1947.
3 Reproduced in *Dawn*, 10 September 1947.
4 Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 211 ; see also Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 493.

taneous act of revenge by Sikh refugees from Western Punjab. Refugees did not carry sten-guns. If the Government of India was not aware of what was being hatched, it must have been very badly served."[1] Indeed, according to Stephens, "some of the larger slaughters by Hindus and Sikhs had been carefully planned, whereas few if any instances of this sort of wickedness can be found on the Muslim side."[2] The Muslims acted only in self-defence and happenings in territories constituting Pakistan were "more spontaneous and less organised than those in East Punjab."[3]

Practically all the Muslims in Pahargunj, Subzi Mandi, Qarolbagh, and Lodhi Colony areas of Delhi were butchered, their belonging looted and their women abducted. No body would know how many thousands of Muslims were killed for there was a complete blackout of news from Delhi. However, according to one source, by 10 September, fifteen thousand Muslims had been killed in Delhi and its suburbs. Gandhi himself admitted later that no less than 137 mosques in Delhi were attacked and desecrated and that one, located less than one-half mile from Nehru's Council Chamber, had been converted into a temple, with an idol installed. Most Muslim shrines and mausoleums, including Hazrat Bakhtiar Kaki's, were occupied by non-Muslims.[4] On top of it, there were attempts at forcible conver-

1 *Spectator* (London): Reproduced in the *Pakistan Times*, 9 December 1947.

2 *Stephens, op. cit*, p. 182.

3 *Connel, op. cit.*, p., 922 ; also p. 911.

4 See editorial, "Contrast" *Dawn*, 4 December 1947 ; also Ainul Mulk, "Foreign Affairs : a weekly commentary", *in ibid.*

sion of Muslims as well. Some 150,000 Muslims left Delhi in just about six weeks, and more were eager to leave as soon as arrangements were made. In the result, Delhi's Muslim population was reduced by half.

Yet another painful aspect of the Delhi disturbances was the utter apathy and indifference of responsible Indian leadership to the harrowing plight of the Muslims. Both Gandhi and Nehru did make efforts to control the situation, but failed because the rest of the Indian leadership was far from helpful. In vain, did Nehru complain to Gandhi "that he could not tolerate the situation in Delhi where Muslim citizens were being killed like cats and dogs". For Sardar Patel, who, as the Home Minister, was responsible for the administration of Delhi, "lightheartedly dismissed" not only this, but "any complaint made on this account.'' To him, however, Jawaharlal's complaints were completely incomprehensible".[1] At the height of the Delhi massacres, he bluntly told a Muslim leader when he begged for his intervention, "if all the Muslims in Delhi give me in writing that they want to go to Pakistan, I would correspond with the Pakistan Government. Otherwise, I cannot suppress the fury of the refugee and Gurkha force."[2]

The Congress President, Kripalani, warned Muslims that the Indian Government could not protect Muslims " merely on the strength of our police and army. . . The safety of Muslims must come from their

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1 Azad, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-17

2 *Dawn*, 10 September 1947.

neighbours who form the majority of the population and from where majority in the ranks of the police and the army must come. These will not be active in affording this protection unless they know that their coreligionists in Pakistan are getting a fair deal."[1] This theory of hostages was tragic enough, but some Indian leaders went a step further : they characterised Indian Muslims as aliens and even denied their claim to any citizenship rights.[2] The immemorial technique of giving the dog a bad name, it seemed, could never have been put to a more effective use.

In any case, the Indian Muslims' protestations of loyalty came to nothing. At one time, even Gandhi impliedly doubted the loyalty of the Muslims :" . . . the Muslims whose loyalty was with Pakistan should not stay in the Indian Union."[3] Jinnah, on the other hand, tried to argue : "Minorities do not cease to be citizens of the respective states by virtue of belonging to a particular faith, religion or race . . . We do not . . . prescribe any school boy tests of their loyalty. We shall not say to any Hindu citizen of Pakistan : 'if there is war, would you shoot a Hindu ?'"[4] Above the crescendo of war cries from across the border rose high and mighty this one voice of peace and tolerance; this lone voice trying oft and anon, and desperately, to dispel the dark clouds of communal bitterness, soothe anguished humanity and kindle a glimmering

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1 *Dawn*, 16 November 1947.

2 *Deccan Times* (Madras), 22 June 1947.

3 *Dawn*, 28 September 1947, see also al-Mujahid, "Muslims' Loyalty to Indian Union", *Star of Islam*, (Colombo), 29 November 1947.

4 *Deccan Times*, 2 November 1947.

of hope, however faint and feeble, in the hearts of terror-stricken people on both sides of the border. And he was emphatic: "... Whatever the provocations there shall be no retaliation or revenge." "On the contrary, it is the duty of every Mussalman ... to protect and help the weak" ; "it is our bounden duty to protect the minorities and...we mean to give them a fair deal as our citizens."[1] No wonder, an Indian weekly sadly remarked, "While one party is busy winning the confidence of the minorities, the other talks of 'providing full facilities for those who want to migrate from the Indian Union'."[2]

Meantime, the riots spread to other areas, and enveloped the western districts of U. P., parts of Bihar and Rajputana in their roaring flames. There were riots at Meerut, Bulandshehar, Agra, Muttra, Moradabad, Amroha, Bareilly, Rohilkhand, Dehra Doon, Saharanpur, Benaras, Hardwar, Ajmer and dozens of other places. Ajmer probably had the worst of them all : "a repitition of Delhi," reported *the Times of India* (Bombay). Calcutta audaciously flaunted a pirate radio, egging on the Hindus "to avenge the cruelties of West Punjab''.[3] In circumstances like these, a good deal depended upon the attitude of the Indian leaders, most of all upon Gandhi. Paradoxically, however, even this great Indian leader allowed himself to be swayed by the mounting war hysteria in India : in what the *Manchester Guardian* called a "sensational and surely ill-

1 *Deccan Times*, 2 November 1947.

2 *Ibid.*, editorial, 28 September 1947.

3 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 476.

considered" statement[1] on 26 September, he declared, "...If there was no other way of securing justice from Pakistan, if Pakistan persistently refused to see its proved error and continued to minimise it, the Indian Government would have to go to war against it."[2] The effect of Gandhi's threat, according to a British observer, "was adverse to communal peace between the two Dominions".[3]

And in the wake of this 'war cry' came the demand for the complete expulsion of all Muslims from Delhi and western U.P. First voiced by Master Tara Singh, it was before long taken up by the Indian press. and *the Hindustan Times*, generally regarded as the mouthpiece of the Congress and edited by Gandhi's own son, published two 'inspired' articles supporting this demand. "It will not be in the power of the Indian Government," wrote the paper editorially, "to prevent the spread of anti-Muslim feeling in all the areas in which refugees are scattered[4]". This question of the evacuation of Muslims from Delhi and western U.P. was also taken up by the Indian ministers who met Liaquat Ali Khan at Lahore on 5 October 1947 : they desired that arrangements be made to receive them.[5]

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1 *Manchaster Gaurdian*, editorial, 29 September 1947.

2 Tuker, *op. cit.*, p. 455.

3 *Ibid.*, p 456.

4 *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), 9 October 1947.

5 This obviously was intended to crush Pakistan with an intolerable lead of refugees. India had extensive dominions, and she could perhaps take all Pakistani Hindus, but Pakistan being small cannot absorb all Indian Muslims. Thus the Indian Hindus are in an advantageous position and the consciousness of their faith is the cause of unterminable riots in India.

Gandhi's Assassination

Many Hindus could see that continuous pogroms against the Muslims would destroy all chances of establishing an orderly administration. Nehru was one, and even more farsighted was Gandhi. He had his momentary lapses, no doubt (as for instance, when he gave his war-statement or when he approved the despatch of Indian troops into Kashmir), but he was generally on the side of peace. In August, he had, in collaboration with Suhrawardy, successfully tried to bring peace to the riot-torn Calcutta. Since his arrival in New Delhi in September he had made efforts to curb communal passions and ensure security of Muslim life and property. But the attitude of Sardar Patel obviously perturbed Gandhi a good deal. Not only had he failed to reclaim the mass of the Hindus and Sikhs to the path of peace; even Patel was deaf to his fervent appeals. Hence he felt that "he had no weapon left but to fast till peace was restored in Delhi". "In a sense, the fast was directed against Sardar Patel" as well.[1] Patel, on his part, felt that Gandhi seemed "determined to blacken the name of the Hindus before the whole world".[2] Mountbatten's, Press Attache feels that the fast was, as well, meant "to heal the breach between the two great men in the Indian Government," Nehru and Patel, "realising that he alone has the status to do it, and that if he fails not only the Congress party

1 Tuker, *op. cit.*, pp. 215, 216. Sardar Pannekar, then Dewan of Bikaner, also felt that the fast was "undoubtedly directed at Patel". Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten*, (London, 1951), p. 268.

2 Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

but the entire regime would be placed in deadly peril".[1]

In any case, the four-day fast in January 1948 had a sobering effect on Delhi's communal climate but Sardar Patel "did not approve of what Gandhi had done in order to restore a sense of security among the Muslims".[2] Nor did a large group of Hindu extremists who issued pamphlets, describing Gandhi "as the enemy of the Hindus. One pamphlet went so far as to say that if Gandhi did not change his ways, steps should be taken to neutralize him".[3] Even while he was fasting, one group carried black banners outside Birla House, chanting, "Let Gandhi die."[4] Threatening letters were received by mail. A few days later a bomb was thrown at him during one of his prayer meetings. Strangely though, even "the most elementary precautionary measures were not taken even after this warning".[5] The result: Gandhi was assassinated by one Nathuram Vinayak Godse on 30 January 1948 in the Birla Gardens when he came to attend the prayer meeting. When the news broke out, some scaremongers conveniently and

1 Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

2 Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

5 Azad, *op cit*, p. 222. Jai Prakash Narain accused the Indian Government for not taking any action against the RSS despite the outrageous bomb attack: "... instead attempts were made to blanket the criminals by officials within the administration who sabotaged any attempt that might have been made to unearth the conspiracy." Speech, Patna, 15 February 1948. See also the accusation of Govind Sahai, Parliamentary Secretary to the U.P. Premier, *The Hindustan Times*, 23 January 1948.

mischieviously attributed the dastardly act to a Muslim. This rumour was soon squelched, but, in the meantime, Hindus in Bombay, Madras and various other places had wreaked their vengeance upon their Muslim neighbours.

Gandhi, as the *Hindustan Standard* wrote editorially, had been "killed by his own people for whose redemption he [had] lived.[1] He had been killed because he had dared to employ his favourite weapon of fasting not against the British, but against the Hindu fanatics : to coerce them into giving up the slaughter of innocent Muslims. Gruesome as his assassination was, it raised two pertinent queries. If that is the treatment they would mete out to Gandhi for the sheer "crime" of demanding toleration for the helpless Muslims, what could they have had in store for those whose cause he was pleading ? If the Delhi administration under Gandhi's trusted disciple, Sardar Patel, could not give protection to him even after repeated warnings, what protection could he have given to Muslims during the Delhi holocaust ? And as a corollary to this, what protection, if any, would they have received in the rest of the Indian Dominion ?

In any case, Gandhi's assassination, if not his fast, should have turned the minds of thoughtful Hindus to the consequences of the persecution of the Muslims and the effects on their own polity of the activities of the fascist RSS. Godse was a member of this organization which, as we have noted earlier, had long enjoyed "the covert sympathy of certain govern-

1 Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

ment officials'',[1] perhaps even of Patel, but certainly of Dr. Shayama Prasad Mukerjee, a former President of the Hindu Mahasabha, and now a member of the Indian Government. It is as well instructive to note that Sardar Patel had dismissed as late as early January 1948 charges of criminal behaviour against the members of the RSS and even described them as "patriots". "They were after all not working for selfish motives, and they had their faults," he said : "it was Congressmen's duty to win them over and not to suppress them."[2] Mukerji, on the other hand, was reported to have used Godse for important political work. According to a report in the *National Herald*, Mukherji sent a message to Mahant Digvijaynath, the U.P. Mahasabha President, through Godse. The messege which was sent on the eve of the last satyagraha movement of the Hindu Mahasabha, contained the terms of the settlement on the basis of which the movement was finally called off.[3]

Public indignation at the assassination of Gandhi finally led the Indian Government to ban the RSS on 4 February 1948, and arrest its stalwarts. But this ban on RSS was short-lived : as a result of Golwalkar-Patel parleys, it was lifted on 12 July 1949. That was an unfailing index of, if anything, the measure of

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1 Campbell-Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 16f, n. 2.

2 In a speech at Lucknow on 6 January 1948 : *The Hindustan Times*, 7 January 1948. The techniques and objectives of these "patriots" were revealed by Govind Sahai thus : "Hindu youths were employed to throw crackers on Hindu mobs and the Muslims were blamed for it...The situation was analogous to the one existing in Nazi Germany when similar tactics were used to create hatred against Jews." *The Hindustan Times*, 23 January 1948.

3 *National Herald* (Lucknow), 4 February 1948.

RSS influence in the Indian Government at various levels.

More astonishing was the decision of the Congress Working Committee, three months later, to permit members of the RSS to join the Congress if they so wished. Protests from various quarters elicited a stout defence of the fateful decision from Pandit D.P. Misra, Home Minister for Madhya Pradesh : " . . . when Congressmen did not object to Jamiat-ul-'Ulema's members joining the Congress despite the former's declaration to safeguard Islamic culture and welcome those ex-Muslim Leaguers who played an important role in the country's tragic partition into the Congress fold, then why should they oppose Sangh members' entry into the Congress organization?"[1] Nor did the statements of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, then Congress President, and of one of the secretaries help in clearing up the confusion.[2] Pandit Nehru was away, on a trip to the United States, and the pro-RSS minority in the Congress headed by Sardar Patel had triumphed for the moment. According to Curran two factors account for the subsequent reversal of the Congress decision six weeks later. For one thing, there were too many protests, loud and vehement as well ; for another, the "RSS men did not come over in sizeable numbers while Dr. Pattabhi and others, by issuing confusing statements, played for sufficient time". All this proved beyond doubt the degree of collusion and collaboration between the RSS on the

1 *Hindustan Times*, 1 November 1949.

2 See their statements in *The Hindu* (Madras),30 October and 2 November, 1949.

one hand and responsible Congressmen and members of the Union and State governments on the other. It is also instructive to note that soon enough the Congress elected as its President Babu Purshotemdas Tandon, "a respected Hindu scholar and politician" who was "well known for his pronounced Hindu views and for his advocacy of a firmer policy towards Pakistan".[1] His election seemed "to indicate a trend in Congress expressive of a growing form of Hindu Nationalism".[2]

Since 1949, the Sangh has thrived on two themes : anti-Communists and anti-Muslims. Though the activities and attitude of the Sangh after independance belong to a different chapter of history, it would be worthwhile to note, before leaving the subject, that in its view, the safety and security of India lay in the "nationalisation of our civil services. Our civil and police administration cannot be safe . . . until every Muslim in the government has been removed to Pakistan."[3]

1 *Curran, op. cit.*, p. 66.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 67
3 "Secularism versus Security", *Organiser*, (New Delhi), 27 March 1950

CHAPTER VI

JINNAH-GANDHI TALKS, 1944

The background of Jinnah-Gandhi talks of September 1944 is traceable to an individual move made by the famous Congress leader of Madras, C. Rajagopalachari, who, on account of his liberal attitude, had to resign from the Congress. When the Indian National Congress availed itself of the outbreak of the second World War to force a decision upon the British Government on full independence of India by a policy of non-co-operation[1] it was Rajagopalachari who realised the necessity for 'Hindu-Muslim reconciliation' as a pre-requisite for the attainment of independence. The basis for Hindu-Muslim co-operation in 1942 could have been the famous Lahore Resolution of March 1940 which later came to be known as the Pakistan Resolution. Of all the Congress leaders it was Rajagopalachari who possessed the catholicity of outlook to recognise the reasonableness of the Muslim demand. He acknowledged that the League and the Congress were the two 'principal political organisations' and bracketed Jinnah and Gandhi by saying 'one has become almost as famous as the other'[2]

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1 Coupland, *India—A re-statement*, (Oxford University Press, 1945), p. 200.
2 *Statesman*, 23 January 1942 as quoted in Coupland, p. 212.

On April 23, 1942 Rajagopalachari accordingly addressed a small gathering of his old Congress supporters in the Madras Legislature and carried two resolutions for submission to the All India Congress Committee, the first recommending the acceptance of partition in principle and the second proposing the restoration of responsible government in Madras (all the Congress Ministries having resigned in 1939).

The AICC met at Allahabad from April 29 to May 2, 1942. On May 2 Rajagopalachari mooted his famous proposal on Pakistan in the following terms :

"It is absolutely and urgently necessary in the best interests of the country at this hour of peril to do all that Congress can possibly do to remove every obstacle in the way of the establishment of a national administration to face the present situation ; and therefore inasmuch as the Muslim League has insisted on the recognition of the right of separation of certain areas from United India upon the ascertainment of the wishes of the people of such areas as a condition precedent for United National action at this moment of grave national danger, the AICC is of the opinion that to sacrifice the chances of the formation of a national government at this grave crisis for the doubtful advantage of maintaining a controversy over the unity is a most unwise policy "..........."and that it has become necessary to choose the lesser evil and acknowledge the Muslim League's claim for separation...........and thereby remove all doubts and fears in this regard and to invite the

Muslim League for consultation for the purpose of arriving at an agreement and securing the installation of a national government to meet the present emergency."[1] The proposal was, however, rejected by 120 to 15 votes, instead, a counter resolution moved by Jagatnarain Lal was passed denouncing "any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component state or territorial unit to secede from the Indian union or federation" as detrimental to the best interests of the people of the different States and provinces and the country as a whole and declaring that the Congress 'cannot agree to any such proposal.'[2]

Rajagopalachari, however, did not give up hope. Two years later in April 1944 while Gandhi and other Congress leaders were in jail he was carrying on negotiations with Jinnah for a settlement. The correspondence was released by Rajagopalachari on July 9, 1944, and containd what came to be known as the 'Rajaji Formula' intended to form the basis of talks between Jinnah and Gandhi for a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem. Rajagopalachari declared that he had already obtained Gandhi's approval for the formula.[3] The text of the formula is as follows :

"Basis for terms of settlement between the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League to which Gandhi and Jinnah agree and which they

1 Quoted in D. N. Benerjee, *Partition or Federation*, Calcutta. 1945, pp. 127-8.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 140.

3 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad : *Speeches and Writings of Jinnah* (Lahore, 1947), Vol. II, pp. 127-132.

will endeavour respectively to get the Congress and the League to approve :

"Subject to the terms set out below as regards the constitution for free India the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for independence and will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim government for the transitional period.

"After the termination of the war a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of the inhabitants held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. Such decision shall be given effect to without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either State.

"It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.

"In the event of separation mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding Defence, Commerce, Communications and for other essential purposes.

"Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis.

"These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India."

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1 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 128-129.

This then was the basis of talks between Jinnah and Gandhi to arrive at a Hindu-Muslim settlement. Gandhi addressed a letter to Jinnah to which the latter's reply was given on 24 July accepting the suggestion for a meeting between the two and offering his residence at Bombay as venue for discussion.[1] Addressing the meeting of the Council of the All India Muslim League at Lahore on July 30, 1944 Jinnah expressed his pleasure at Gandhi's acceptance in his private capacity at least of the 'principle of Pakistan' though he subjected the Rajaji formula itself to the severest criticism from various points of view. In the end he said, "I ask you to pray and give me your blessings. God willing, we may come to an honourable settlement.'' The Council invested Jinnah with full powers to negotiate with Gandhi on its behalf.[2]

It may be worthwhile at this stage to note the reaction in various quarters prior to the holding of these talks. "The rank and file of Muslims in the League, and its many progressive leaders, office-holders and editors, were extremely keen that the negotiations should lead to a Congress-League settlement." But on the contrary, the Mahasabha young men shouted anti-Pakistan slogans at Gandhi's prayer meetings at Panchgani. Many Congressmen also expressed their disapproval of Gandhi's move.[3] It was clear from the outset that while Jinnah was invested

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1 Jamil-ud-Din Ahmad, Vol. II, p. 148.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 149.

3 Wilfred Cantweel Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, (London, 1946), p, 281.

with full powers to start negotiations on behalf of the Muslim League, Gandhi was undertaking an enterprise on his own behalf without the official Congress sanction. However there was expression of good-will on the part of some Congressmen at least. At Anand Bhawan, Allahabad, prominent Congressmen and Leaguers adopted a resolution for Hindu-Muslim unity. "To-day you pray that God may bless the Quaid-e-Azam and me with wisdom to reach a common understanding in the interest of India.", implored Gandhi at Sevagram.[1]

The meeting then took place between Jinnah and Gandhi at the former's residence at Bombay from 9 September to 27 September. They met almost every day, sometimes both in the morning and in the evening except when Gandhi fasted or Jinnah excused himself on account of Muslim observance of sacred occasions in *Ramaḍān* and the *Īd.* On 27 September Jinnah announced the termination of talks after the failure of the two leaders to reach an agreement saying : "We trust that this is not the final end of our effort," while Gandhi commented : "The breakdown is only so-called. It is an adjournment *sine die.*" In the course of the seventeen-day discussions there had passed between Jinnah and Gandhi 24 letters which were now made public.[2] In a statement issued along with the text of the correspondence Jinnah said, "Without prejudice to my objection, that in order to reach any settlement, negotiations can

1 Tendulkar, *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, p. 337.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 344,

only be carried on properly when the other side is also fully represented and vested with authority, in deference to Gandhi's wishes, I ageed to the task of persuading and of converting him to the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution. I have placed before him everything and every aspect of the Muslim point of view in the course of our prolonged talks and correspondence, and we discussed all the pros and cons generally, and I regret to say that I have failed in my task of converting Gandhi."[1]

The discussion as well as the correspondence falls under three distinct stages. At the beginning Jinnah sought from Gandhi clarification of various points in the Rajaji formula. In the second stage on account of obvious difficulties Gandhi, shunted the Rajaji formula', and applied his mind to the Lahore Resolution.

Eventually Gandhi made some altogether new proposals and after this the final break down took place. The clarification sought by Jinnah of the Rajaji formula included among other things the question of the proposed constitution, the meaning of the term independence, the nature and basis of provisional government, the question of plebiscite on separation, agreement on matters of common concern and the question of transfer of power and the machinery to which transfer was to be made.[2]

In reply to Jinnah's points Gandhi held that "the Lahore resolution is indefinite. Rajaji has taken from

1 Tendulkar, Vol. VI, p. 334.

2 Jinnah'a letter dated 10 September, 1944, Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, pp. 158-162.

it the substance and given it a shape"[1] To the various queries he went on replying by saying that independence meant what was envisaged in the AICC resolution of 1942 with the difference that it could not be on the basis of a United India[2]. The interim Government according to him, was to be an all-powerful body framing the constitution, appointing a plebiscite commission[3] for demarcating the majority areas, holding the plebiscite and drafting an agreement regarding the administration of matters of common interest.[4] His definition of 'majority', from the very beginning differed from that of Rajaji. While the latter understood by majority as it is used in legal parlance[5] Gandhi meant by it 'clear majority over non-Muslim elements such as in Sind, Baluchistan or the Frontier province.'[6] The transfer of power also according to Gandhi was to be made 'to the nation, that is the provisional government.'[7] It is on account of the key position of the provisional government that Jinnah wanted to know from Gandhi the exact nature of composition, power and responsibility of the provisional interim government.[8] Gandhi's final reply to this was that "the Provisional interim government will be responsible to the elected members of the present Assembly or a newly elected one.

1 Gandhi's letter dated 11 Sept., Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 163.
2 Gandhi's letter dated 15 Sept., *Ibid.*, pp. 177-78.
3 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 163.
4 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol, II, pp. 169-170.
5 *Ibid.*, p. 169.
6 Gandhi's letter of 11 September; Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 163.
7 *Ibid.*
8 *Ibid.*, pp. 167, 171-2.

It will have all powers minus that of the Commander-in-Chief during the War and full powers thereafter. It will be the authority to give effect to the agreement that may be arrived at between the League and the Congress and ratified by other parties."[1] To Gandhi's charge that the Lahore resolution was indefinite Jinnah replied that the former never asked him for any clarification or explanation. He strongly repudiated Gandhi's contention that Rajaji had taken from the Lahore resolution its substance and given it a shape. 'On the contrary' said Jinnah, 'he has not only put it out of shape but mutilated it'.[2]

The discussion then veered round the Lahore resolution at Gandhi's instance : "For the moment I have shunted the Rajaji formula'', said Gandhi, "and with your assistance am applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore resolution of the Muslim League."[3] In this context Gandhi repudiated Jinnah's claim that the Muslims constituted a nation :

"I find no parallel in history for a body of converts and their descendants claiming to be a nation apart from the parent stock''.[4]

"The only real, though awful. test of nationhood arises out of our common political subjection," averred Gandhi, "if you and I throw off this subjection by our combined effort, we shall be born a politically

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1 Gandhi's letter of 11 September, Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 179.
2 *Ibid.*, Jamil-ud Din, Vol. II, p. 165.
3 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 173.
4 *Ibid.*

free nation out of our travail. If by then we have not learnt to prize our freedom we may quarrel among ourselves and, for want of a common master holding us together in his iron grip, seek to split up into smaller groups and nationalities. There will be nothing to prevent us from falling to that level, and we shall not have to go in search of a master. There are many claimants to the throne that never remains vacant,"[1] Having conjured up this awful vision, Gandhi subjected the Lahore resolution to a thorough-going scrutiny and sought a number of clarifications from Jinnah, chief among these being : the distinguishing features of an Indian Muslim separating him from a non-Muslim, whether the demaracation of the Pakistan area was to take place during the pendency of the British rule, whether the people of the region as defined in the Lahore resolution were to have any voice in the matter of separation, the provision for defence and similar matters of common concern and finally the question of the opinion of those Muslims who dissented from the policy of the League.[2] 'As I write this letter and imagine the working of the resolution in practice, I see nothing but ruin for the whole of India' concluded Gandhi sceptically.[3]

Jinnah's reply to these points was precise and terse. Asserting that the Muslims had their own "culture and civilisation, language and literature, art and architecture, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calender, history

1 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 177.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 174-176.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 177.

and traditions, aptitudes and ambition", he emphasised that they were a nation distinct from the Hindus. "By all canons of international law we are a nation," declared Jinnah emphatically. He then went on to say that the question of demarcation will have to be taken up immediately as soon as the Lahore resolution is accepted.[1] As for the plebiscite Jinnah asserted that "we claim the right of self-determination as a nation and not as a territorial unit and that we are entitled to exercise our inherent right as a Muslim nation which is our birthright . . . the right of self-determination which we claim postulates that we are a nation and as such it would be the self-determination of the Mussalmans and they alone are entitled to exercise that right."

With regard to subjects of common concern, he said that it was a matter for the constitution-making body chosen by Pakistan to deal with and decide all matters as a sovereign body representing Pakistan vis-a-vis the constitution-making body of Hindustan or any other party concerned. In fact he was opposed to defence and similar matters becoming subjects of common concern for Pakistan and Hindustan which were meant to be two separate independent sovereign States.[2]

As regards Gandhi's reference to the Muslims who dissented from the League, Jinnah emphatically declared that the Muslim League was the only authoritative and representative organisation of Muslim India.[3]

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1 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 181.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 189-190.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 182.

When elaborate discussion had taken place on both the Rajaji formula and the Lahore resolution Gandhi brought in some new points and finally a proposal of his own. "Can we not agree to differ," said he, "on the question of two nations and yet solve the problem on the basis of self-determination."[1]

About the nature of partition Gandhi said, "Let it be a partition as between two brothers if a division there must be."[2] It is evident that he was discussing partition with very great mental reservations. As to the former Jinnah said : "we claim the right of self-determination as a nation and not as a territorial unit and that we are entitled to exercise our inherent right as a Muslim nation, which is our birth-right.[3] On the question of partition between two brothers Jinnah asked for rough outlines requesting Gandhi to say in what way it was different from the Lahore resolution.[4] The discussion then reached almost a breaking point when Gandhi said in despair : "Our talks and our correspondence seem to run in parallel lines and never touch one another."[5] Then on September 24 Gandhi made his own offer for the solution of Hindu-Muslim problem :

"I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations but one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the North-West zone i.e. Baluchistan, Sind, North-West Frontier Province where they are in

1 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 185.
2 *Ibid.* p. 191. 3 *Ibid.*, p. 189. 4 *Ibid.*, p. 194.
5 *Ibid.*, p. 195.

absolute majority over all other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India.

Differing from you on the general basis I can yet recommend to the Congress and the country the acceptance of the claim for separation contained in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore of 1940 on my basis and on the following terms :

The areas should be demarcated by a commission approved by the Congress and the League. The wishes of the inhabitants of the areas demarcated should be ascertained through the adult population of the areas or through some equivalent method.

If the vote is in favour of separation it shall be agreed that these areas shall form a separate State as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination and can, therefore, be constituted into two sovereign independent States."

There shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of foreign affairs, defence, internal communications, customs, commerce and the like, which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest between the contracting parties.

The treaty shall also contain terms for safeguarding the rights of minorities in the two States.

Immediately on the acceptance of this agreement by the Congress and the League the two shall

decide upon a common course of action for the attainment of the independence of India.

The League will, however, be free to remain out of any direct action to which the Congress might resort and in which the League may not be willing to participate.[1]

To this Jinnah replied in his letter dated 25 September by summing up Gandhi's attitude to the Lahore resolution in the following manner :

"You have already rejected the basis and fundamental principles of the Lahore resolution :

(1) You do not accept that the Muslims of India are a nation.

(2) You do not accept that the Muslims have an inherent right of self-determination.

(3) You do no accept that they alone are entitled to exercise this right.

(4) You do not accept that Pakistan is composed of two zones, north-west and north-east, comprising six provinces, namely Sind, Baluchistan, the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab, Bengal and Assam subject to territorial adjustments......[2]

Earlier Jinnah elaborated his contention that the August 1942 resolution of the Congress was inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India, for, 'setting up of a federal central government immediately on the basis of a united democratic Government of

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1 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, pp. 197-8.

2 *Ibid*, pp. 198-9.

India . . . means establishing a Hindu Raj.' The Constituent Assembly set up by this government will be composed of an 'overwhelming majority of Hindus, nearly 75 per cent.' To realise this demand the Congress has decided to 'resort to mass civil disobedience movement.'[1]

This time also Jinnah reiterated that the August 1942 resolution is against the ideals and demands of the Muslim League. He referred to Jagat Narayan Lal resolution of May 1942 which categorically denounced 'any move to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component State or territorial Unit to secede from the Indian Union or Federation' and declared that the Congress 'cannot agree to any such proposal.' "These two resolutions," Jinnah pointed out, "so long as they stand, are a complete bar to any settlement on the basis of the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan." Jinnah then charged Gandhi with insincerity by saying that "the question of the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan is only on your lips and it does not come from your heart." About the new terms offered by Gandhi, Jinnah said that these were also opposed to the fundamental basis and principles of Lahore resolution. According to Gandhi's terms the boundaries of the Pakistan provinces 'will be maimed and mutilated beyond redemption and leaves us only with the husk.' Even in the mutilated areas the right of self-determination according to Gandhi, will not be exercised by Muslims and their separation 'after India is free from foreign do-

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1 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 193.

mination' was something very vague, and Jinnah emphasised that "we should come to a complete settlement of our own immediately and by our united front and efforts do everything in our power to secure the freedom and independence of the peoples of India on the basis of Pakistan and Hindustan."[1] Earlier Jinnah had characterised such an attitude of freedom first and partition next on the part of Gandhi as 'putting the cart before the horse.'[2] As for the treaty of separation providing for the administration of a number of important subjects, Jinnah remarked that "all these matters which are the life-blood of any State cannot be delegated to any central authority or government." He, however, conceded that "the matter of security of the two States and the natural and mutual obligations that may arise out of physical contiguity will be for the constitution-making bodies of Pakistan and Hindustan or the party concerned to deal with them on the footing of there being two independent States."[3]

Gandhi then in a desperate attempt to influence the Muslim public opinion over the head of its leader requested Jinnah to give an opportunity to address the League Council or an open session of the League, which suggestion Jinnah had to reject courteously on the ground that none but a member or a delegate ever attends such a meeting.[4] Nevertheless Gandhi maintained that his formula of September 24 and the

1 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, pp. 200-203.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 145.
3 *Ibid.*, p. 203.
4 *Ibid.*, pp. 205, 207-208.

Rajaji formula embody in them the substance of the Lahore resolution. He, however, refused to accept the Lahore resolution as interpreted by Jinnah.[1]

Thus the talks ended in failure. The main reason of their failure lay in Gandhi's total disregard of the two-nation idea which was the fundamental basis of the Muslims' demand embodied in the Lahore resolution and his rejection of the Muslims' right of self-determination. Addressing a press conference at Bombay after the failure of the talks on 4 October 1944, Jinnah said : "In one breath Gandhi agrees to the principle of division and in the next he makes proposals which go to destroy the very foundation on which the division is claimed by Muslim India. On the one hand he wants a League-Congress agreement, and on the other denies its representative character and authority to speak on behalf of the Mussalmans of India.[2] On the same occasion Jinnah explained the real meaning of Gandhi's offer and said that even after Pakistan was granted under terms of the offer, matters such as foreign affairs, defence, internal communication, customs, commerce and the like would remain vested in the Federal National Government : "with an overwhelming and solid majority of the Hindus which virtually would be a Hindu Raj."[3] In an interview to a foreign correspondent in Bombay on 6 October he characterised this sort of Pakistan as a "form of provincial autonomy subject

1 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 209.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 217.
3 *Ibid*, p. 213.

always in the most vital matters to an overwhelmingly Hindu federal authority." Jinnah also foresaw, not without reason, that once an interim government is established on the basis of a united India and democratic parliamentary government "the question of Pakistan would be shelved to doomsday and practically buried."[1]

The failure of the Jinnah-Gandhi talks had different repercussions in various circles. The majority of the Hindus—including the Mahasabhaites-received the news of the break-down with utmost relief and even joy, for they were anxious lest their great leader should commit himself to the 'vivisection of Mother India.'[2] It was the Muslims who were most bitterly disappointed when the conversations failed.[3] Though the prospect of a Hindu-Muslim settlement was remoter than ever after the end of the talks the discussions that had taken place showed beyond doubt that even by half-heartedly conceding to the principle of partition and acknowledging 'the preponderating influence and position of the Muslim League' Gandhi, despite his opposition to separate sovereign Pakistan, took the first step in the direction of finally accepting it as a solution of the Hindu-Muslim question and India's constitutional problem.

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1 Jamil-ud-Din, Vol. II, p. 222.

2 Coupland, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

3 Smith, *op. cit.*, p 281

CHAPTER VII

THE SIMLA CONFERENCE

The failure of the Cripps Mission created a deadlock in Indian politics. Soon after, the Indian National Congress aggravated the situation by adopting the "Quit India" resolution. The British authorities struck back with lightning rapidity. The Congress was declared an unlawful organization and its leaders were imprisoned all over the sub-continent. Armed Forces were employed in quelling the disorders unleashed by the doings of certain Congressites in Upper India.[1]

The All India Muslim League, did not support the Congress. Since 1936-37 it had been displaying an unprecedented vitality and gaining strength and popularity amongst the Muslims. Its spirited leadership had consolidated its position and composed the internal differences. With the adoption of the Lahore Resolution (March, 1940) a sense of devotion and a missionary zeal seemed to prevail among the Leaguers. Though it was not as yet as strong as some of its leaders claimed, the League had undoubtedly, by setting before itself a positive ideal, acquired a dynamic potentiality for the realization of its ultimate objective.

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1. The political crimes which followed the *"Quit India"* resolution were at their height in Eastern U. P. and Bihar. Anarchist groups were active in other parts of the country, including Delhi. Panjab was comparatively calm and peaceful.

The British Government in India were fighting a deadly war which had knocked at the very doors of the sub-continent, and in 1942 the Japanese repeatedly bombed Calcutta. Under the circumstances the British attempted to gain the co-operation of the political leaders. Lord Linlithgow's efforts to persuade the organized political parties to join hands with him could not succeed. The Government were therefore, obliged to enlist the support of capable and prominent non-party 'liberals'. In 1940, the Executive Council consisted of four Europeans and three non-official Indians. Two years later, under the impact of the war, the British desire to form a more popular if not entirely democratic Council, had resulted in the increase of the number of Indian members to eleven. "Unfortunately", said the Secretary of State about these members of the Executive Council, "it has to be admitted, and the members of the present Executive Council would be the first to admit it, that their position is weakened by the fact that they do not enjoy the support of the main organized political parties."[1]

With the war drawing to an end the problem of the political future of India occupied the minds of British statesmen and the Indian politicians. Since August 1917, Britain had been committed to the policy of progressive realization of self-government for India. Many factors were making it impossible for Britain to prolong its political hold. The nationalist aspirations of the Muslims and non-Muslims

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1. Mr. Amery in the House of Commons, 14th June, 1945.

alike were at their highest; thousands of Indian soldiers whose comrades in arms had laid down their lives for the liberation of European and Asian countries would soon be returning to India with a deep consciousness of the subjugation of their own country.[1] Equally important was reversal of the financial relations between Britain and India. "Britain's purchases of war supplies had been so vast that she was no longer India's creditor but her debtor to the tune of £1,200 million. Hence there could no longer be any question of retaining some measure of control in order to ensure that an Indian Government fulfilled its liabilities."[2] It would, therefore, be a wise policy if Britain could withdraw from Indian atmosphere of peace and goodwill. The Simla Conference was an attempt at devising the preliminaries of the procedure of this withdrawal.

Preparations for launching the proposals were undertaken a few months earlier. On 21 March the British Government announced that it had invited Lord Wavell, the Viceroy of India, to London for personal discussions. It was unofficially stated that the purpose of the visit was to hold discussions with His Majesty's Ministers on the economic and administrative problems in connection with the intensification of war against Japan; and the installation of

1. A clear evidence supporting this remark was the organization of the Indian National Army which hoped to liberate India in collaboration with the enemies of Britain.

2. Lumby E. W. R. *The Transfer of Power in India*, London, 1954, p. 38. For a partial study of financial relations between Britain and India before 1939, See Ahmad Z; Some *Economic and Financial Aspects of the British Rule in India.* Allahabad, 1942.

machinery for resolving the constitutional deadlock in India. The Viceroy flew to England reaching two days later and was engaged mostly in secret discussion with the Cabinet, party leaders, moulders of public opinion and representatives of the various commercial and financial interests. All aspects of the Indian problem were considered in detail. A thorough and searching examination of the principles, issues and interests involved, was conducted with the help of a body of experts. After a stay of about ten weeks the Viceroy returned to India on 6 June.[1]

During Lord Wavell's stay in England the Standing Committee of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's Non-Party Leaders Conference published the comprehensive resolution on 1 April. This resolution, "after careful consideration of the Muslim League's Lahore resolution of 1940" and various other resolutions of the League and after taking into account the Gandhi-Jinnah talks and "CR" proposals, stated that "any division of India into two or more separate states was unjustified and would endanger peace and the orderly progress of the country without compensatory advantage." Regarding the Indianization of the Executive Council, the resolution recommended the formation of a "composite, multi-community Indian cabinet," representing Hindus, Muslims, Scheduled Castes, Sikhs, Indian Christians and Anglo-Indians, representation to each community

1. The full story of these days of hectic activity may not perhaps be told with any degree of authenticity for a generation or so, but Lord Wavell's stay in England was significant when all the fundamental problems bearing on India's future place in the British Empire were scrutinized from every angle.

to be accorded in proportion to its strength in the Central Legislature. The Executive Council would, in future, work as a cabinet with collective responsibility under the guidance and leadership of the Prime Minister, who would be empowered to recommend the appointment of ministers. There would be a Deputy Prime Minister to be drawn from a community other than that of the Prime Minister.

Sapru's other recommendations bore the same stamp. The constitution of a sovereign assembly, the procedure of the accession of the Indian States, distribution of powers between the Federal Government and the Constituent units were all conceived on the assumption of an Akhand (United) Hindustan, predominantly Hindu in character but doling out certain concessions to other communities.

Mohammed Ali Jinnah strongly attacked the proposals in a statement issued on the 2nd of April. "The Sapru Committee," he said, "was nothing but the handmaid of the Congress . . . playing to the tune of Mr. Gandhi. Their pompous and pious professions that they are detached and independent body of men are utterly false, and this is clear from their previous activities and resolutions." He warned the Muslims that "if either of the alternatives they offer is accepted, Muslim aspirations and their national demand of Pakistan would be torpedoed by this subtle outflanking movement." He declared that Muslim India would never agree to change the Indian constitution on the basis of Akhand Hindustan.

As the Viceroy returned to India, there was a general feeling of expectation and excitement in the political circles. Newspapers were full of rumours about the nature of the offer Britain was going to make. Nine days after the Viceroy's return, the Secretary of State made important policy statement in the House of Commons.[1]

The statement emphasized that the Cripps offer of March 1942 stood "in its entirety without change or qualification." The Secretary of State hoped that political leaders in India would be able to reach an agreement regarding the future form of Indian Government. His Majesty's Government were anxious to break the political deadlock in the country in order to give an impetus to social and economic progress. For that purpose they might suggest "something in the interim period, under the existing constitution, pending the formulation by Indians of their future constitutional arrangement which would enable the main communities and parties to co-operate more closely together with the British to the benefit of the people of India as a whole."[2] He also clearly stated that "it is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to introduce any change contrary to the wishes of the major Indian communities."

The Secretary of State proposed that "the Executive Council should be reconstituted and that

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1. "Statement of Policy of His Majesty's Government made by the Secretary of State for India on June 14th, 1945". Cmel. 6652. 1945.

2 A minor amendment of the Ninth Schedule of the Government of India Act, 1935 was, however, necessary.

the Viceroy should in future make his selection for nomination to the Crown for appointment to his Executive Council from amongst leaders of Indian political life at the Centre and in the Provinces, *in proportions which would give a balanced representation of the main communities, including equal proportions of Moslems and Caste Hindus*."[1] The reconstituted Council would have only two European members, the Viceroy and the Commander-in-chief "till Indian defence remains a British responsibility." The External Affairs of India, other than the tribal and frontier matters would also be placed under an Indian Member.

On the same day, Lord Wavell, in a broadcast from Delhi described the major functions of the new Council[2]: to prosecute the war against Japan; to carry out the Government until a new permanent constitution was agreed to and to consider the means of realizing that agreement. He proposed to hold a high-level conference at Simla from 25 June, and inivited the following leaders to attend it :

Premiers of the Provinces, and also those who had held that office in provinces under section 93.

Leader of the Congress and the Deputy leader of the Muslim League Party in the Central Legislative Assembly.

Leaders of the Congress and the League Parties in the Council of State.

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1 Italics mine.

2 Text of the broadcast in "*Times of India*" June 15th, 1945.

Leaders of the Nationalist Party and of the European Group in the Central Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Gandhi and Mr. M. A. Jinnah as recognized leaders of the two main political parties.

Rao N. Bahadur, representative of Scheduled Castes and Master Tara Singh, representative of the Sikhs.

The Viceroy also referred to the principle of equal representation (parity) of the Muslims and the Caste Hindus in the proposed Executive Council.[1] Promising immediate release of the members of the Congress Working Committee, he sounded a note of optimism : "I have every hope that the meeting will succeed, if the party leaders would approach the problem with the sincere intention of working with me and with each other. I can assure them that there is a most genuine desire on the part of all responsible leaders in the United Kingdom and of the British people as a whole . . ."[2]

The proposals were heartily welcomed by political parties in Britain. In the House of Commons Mr. Attlee (Labour), Professor Hill (Conservative) and Mr. Graham White (Liberal) paid tributes to the

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1 On this basis, the following leading political figures, other than those named above, were invited : Sir Muhammad Sa'adullah (Assam); Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin (Bengal); Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha (Bihar); Mr. B.G. Kher (Bombay); Pandit Ravishankar Shukla (Central Province); Mr. C. Rajgopalachari (Madras); Dr. Khan Sahib (North-West Frontier Province); The Maharaja of Parlakimedi (Orissa); Malik Khizar Hyat Khan (Panjab); Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah (Sindh); Pandit G. V. Pant (United Provinces).

2 An appeal to the Indian Leaders was also made in a speech from the Throne. "*Times of India*," 16th June, 1945.

wise and profound policy initiated by the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, Lords Listowell, Samuel and Hailey were full of praise in the House of Lords, while Sir Stafford Cripps expresssed warm support for them in a public speech at Edinburgh.[1]

Immediately after hearing Lord Wavell's broadcast speech, M. K. Gandhi sent him a telegram that he did not represent any institution and therefore he "must not attend as representing the Congress," which should be represented by the Congress President Abul Kalam Azad, or by his nominee.[2] In the meantime the Viceroy had sent him an official invitation requesting him to confer with him before the formal inauguration of the Conference. In another telegram Gandhi took exception to the phrase "Caste-Hindus" used by the Viceroy in his broadcast... "there are no caste and casteless Hindus who are at all political minded. Therefore, the word rings untrue and offensive."[3] The Viceroy explained that he had not used the phrase with any "offensive intention" and he understood the phrase to mean "Hindus other than the Scheduled Castes."[4]

Acting upon Gandhi's suggestion the Viceroy extended the invitation to Abul Kalam Azad. But the idea of proposed parity between Hindus and Muslims was still unpalatable to Mr. Gandhi :

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1 *"The Times" London.* June 15th, 1945.

2 Gandhi's telegram to the Viceroy, June 14th, 1945 : also his Press statement of the same date.

3 Gandhi's telegram to the Viceroy dated June 16th ; 1945.

4 Viceroy's telegram to Gandhi June 16th, 1945.

"The fixed parity between the Caste Hindus and Muslims as an unchangeable religious division will become officially stereotyped on the eve of independence. You will quite unconsciously, but equally surely, defeat the purpose of the Conference if parity between Caste Hindus and Muslims is unalterable. Parity between the Congress and the League is understandable. I am eager to help you and the British people, but not at the sacrifice of fundamental and universal principles."[1]

The Viceroy replied telegraphically that the question of parity should be discussed at the Conference and not before it.[2] Gandhi still insisted on his point. In another telegram, he re-emphasized his objection adding that "if that view (on parity) is incapable of being altered, my advice to Congress will be not to participate in the formation of the Executive Council."[3] He, however, agreed to confer with the Viceroy on 24 June at Simla.

Other leaders of the Congress aired similar views. Mr. Patel, in a statement to the Press, disputed the Viceroy's offer of parity as did some of the other top-ranking Congressites.

Mohammed Ali Jinnah accepted the official invitation to hold preliminary talks with Lord Wavell on the 24th. As for the Conference, he asked the Viceroy to postpone it for a few days because he wanted to consult the Working Committee of the

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1 Gandhi's telegram to the Viceroy, June 17th, 1945.

2 Viceroy's telegram to Gandhi, June 18, 1945.

3 Gandhi's telegram to the Viceroy, June 18th. 1945. (Note on Parity) :

All India Muslim League. The Viceroy reiterated his request asking Jinnah to attend the Conference and suggested that the Working Committee could meet at Simla at the end of the month. He offered to provide the necessary amenities for the members of the Committee if Jinnah accepted the suggestion. In a telegraphic message, Jinnah was uncommitted, "Your telegram dated 17th. After our discussion on 24th I shall be better able to inform you (a) whether the members of the League will attend the Conference on the 25th, (b) whether the Working Committee meeting should be called at the end of June, as suggested by you. I thank you for the offer of help in arranging travel accomodation for the members of my Working Committee."[1]

By this time, intriguing news about the Viceroy's intention to abandon the principle of parity had started appearing in the press. Jinnah was quick to draw the Viceroy's attention to this, when in the same telegram he continued: "Press reports show that you contemplate revising your broadcast plan without consulting the League. If true, it would lead to more difficulties than are involved in your present plan and would further retard the chances of success of your plan."[2]

Jinnah left Bombay for Simla on the 21st. On the same day, Liaquat Ali Khan, as General Secretary

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1 Jinnah's telegram to the Viceroy, June 18th, 1945.

2 Following the lead of Jinnah, the Leaguers all over the country demanded that the Viceroy should not go back on the text of his broadcast message. In fact, there was no such attempt, and the League's apprehensions were caused by press reports.

of League, informed all members of the League Committee to remain in readiness for an urgent meeting any moment at Simla after June 24th. At New Delhi, Liaquat met Jinnah, while some members of the local Communist Party also saw him in his railway compartment.

The League leaders reached Simla on 23 June.

Next evening Jinnah met Lord Wavell. The interview lasted for a hundred minutes. The talks were concerned with the clarification of certain points involved in the plan on which the Viceroy declined to commit himself. He maintained that all doubts and difficulties were to be discussed at the Conference and therefore the League should attend it.[1]

After the interview, Jinnah met Muslim League invitees and gave them an oral summary of what had transpired between him and the Viceroy. They also discussed the attitutde the League was to adopt at the Conference. On the following morning, Jinnah before leaving his hotel for the Viceregal Lodge, continued his talks with Liaquat Ali Khan, Khwaja Nazimuddin and Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah. Syed Husain Imam and Muhammad Sa'adullah arrived too late to take part in these discussions.

The Conference opened on Monday, 25 June, at 11 A.M. in the library of the Viceregal Lodge at Simla, which was the venue of the first meeting of the Imperial Legislative Council constituted under the

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1 These facts are based upon contemporary newspaper reports. The exact details of this and other interviews have not yet been made available to the student.

Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909. The Viceroy, in opening the proceedings appealed to the statesmanship and the sense of duty of the delegates. The Conference, he said, had not been convened for the purpose of achieving a final solution of India's complex problems. Its main task was to devise an agreed plan for the formation of an interim government at the Centre which would be representative of organized public opinion in the country.

The Conference then dealt with the rules of procedure and was adjourned. When it met again in the afternoon, Abul Kalam Azad made a speech in Urdu. He stated that the Congress stood for the ultimate independence of India and looked upon the Wavell plan as an interim arrangement. Any decisions made by the Congress leaders attending the Conference, Azad explained, must be ratified by the Congress Working Committee. Other delegates also made short speeches. The League leaders like the Congress, made it clear that the final authority for accepting or rejecting their decisions at the Conference, was vested in the Working Committee of the League. The session ended at 5 P.M.

As the proceedings opened on the next day, it was learnt that the Congress and the League leaders had been trying to contact each other the previous night. The Conference was, therefore, adjourned to Wednesday to give time to the leaders to confer amongst themselves and to settle the mode of distribution of seats on the Executive Council. Before the adjournment, however, the delegates had tentatively

agreed to general principles regarding the duties, scopes and functions of the Council namely :

1. To prosecute the war effectively against Japan till victory is won.

2. To recommend for the new Executive Council, men of ability and influence who are capable of taking decisions and assuming responsibility for carrying out such decisions.

3. To take steps, as soon as the new Executive Council is established, to solve the long term problem of the future constitutional structure of India ;

4. Till such time as the new consitution comes into force, to work under the present constitution and

5. To accept the explanation given by Lord Wavell in his broadcast speech and Mr. Amery in his speech in the House of Commons on the exercise of veto by the Viceroy."[1]

G. B. Pant called on Jinnah in the evening to explore the basis of a possible agreement between the two major parties for the formation of a provisional government. The two leaders were closeted together for more than two hours. "The meeting", commented a leading newspaper, "provided the much-needed personal contact between the Congress and the League." Emerging from the confidential parleys, Pant refused to make any statement. He met Gandhi the same evening and remained with him for another two hours.

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1 A. Mehta and K. Nair : "*The Simla Triangle*" pp. 24-26. The authors do not give the source on which they depended for these facts. In the light of what the Leaguers did and said later, it cannot be said that they agreed to this explanation.

At this time, rapprochement between the League and the Congress was in the air and some minor leaders also interested themselves in the process. Amongst others Mian Iftikharuddin from the Panjab may be mentioned.[1]

The same day H.H. The Aga Khan addressed a cable to Gandhi and Azad. He suggested that Congress should take the lead in the final solution of all political differences in India, including the problem of the Indian States. He outlined the constitution of an "Indian Commonwealth of Nations" which might well be "based on a union of hearts and interests and not on a majority force." Muslim majority provinces in the North-West could be constituted into one united block ; Bengal and Assam could be federated into groups while all these territorial units were to come together under an Indian confederation, which Ceylon Burma and Afghanistan might join later.[2] The motive of his suggestion as stated by him was his profound feeling on the issue and not hostility towards the Congress. He had concluded his message with the words : "You are welcome to throw it in the waste-paper basket."[3]

On Wednesday the Conference met again for an hour. Jinnah moved that it may be adjourned to Friday, the 29th, to enable the delegates to continue their private discussions. A counter proposal that the Viceroy should head a small committee of the

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1 President of the Panjab Provincial Congress.

2 The Aga Khan advocated similar views as early as 1917 in his book "*India In Transition*". It is interesting to compare his scheme with the one advanced by the Cabinet Mission a year later.

3 Messrs. Gandhi and Azad obliged him on that point at least.

League and the Congress leaders for bringing about an agreement between them did not find favour.

Pant and Jinnah met again but their negotiations remained inconclusive. "In the course of those informal talks", stated Abul Kalam Azad a fortnight later, "the position taken by Mr. Jinnah was that Muslim League on behalf of the Muslims should nominate Muslim members in the Executive Council. The Congress found that such a position would be inconsistent with its basic national character."[1]

When the Conference met again on the 29th, the Congress and the League Presidents informed the Viceroy formally that their parties had failed to reach an agreement. The Viceroy said that he would adjourn the Conference for a fortnight to give more time to the leaders for negotiations. In the meantime he would expect the parties to submit a panel of names for his consideration within a week. From this he would select the persons according to his plan.[2] Azad agreed to the suggestion but he wished to consult the Congress Committee before submitting the panel. Jinnah, on the other hand, adopted a cautious attitude. He asked for clarifications on certain points, Muslim quota in the Council, the manner in which the Viceroy would choose from the panels and whether the Government had agreed to the League's exclusive right to nominate the Muslim members. The Viceroy gave no clarifications but tried to cajole him into sub-

1 Press statement of Azad, July 14th, 1945.

2 At first, the League and the Congress were asked to submit between eight to twelve names and the minorities three or four. On Azad's request the Viceroy agreed not to limit the number.

mitting the panel assuring that in doing so, the parties committed themselves to nothing.[1]

At this juncture the case of the Muslim League had taken a definite shape. It was stated on its behalf that Lord Wavell had called the Conference in an attempt to replace the existing Executive Council by one truly representative of communities and interests. The Council should therefore be manned by persons chosen by and enjoying confidence of the various communities. The League represented the overwhelming majority of Muslims, and the League leaders alone should be called upon to represent their community in the Executive Council. While the Hindu Mahasabha had protested against its non-inclusion, no Muslim organization had uttered a single word, and as such had silently acknowledged the League's right to represent the Muslims.[2] The presence of a few Muslims in the Congress did not alter the position of the League. Further, the very participation of the Congress in the Conference along with other bodies nullified its claim as a national body. Therefore only the League had the right to nominate Muslims to the Council. Having agreed to the principle of parity, it was not for the Congress to suggest Muslim

1 According to another report, Jinnah put the following questions to the Viceroy:

i Is it recognized that the League has the sole right to represent the Muslims? (Answer No.)

ii Will the names submitted by the League be accepted (Answer No.)

iii What will happen to the Conference and the plan if the League did not come in? (Answer: The Viceroy would then reconsider the whole political situation).

2 For the protests of the Hindu Mahasabha, see *Indian news-papers*, June 15th/16th, 1945.

names, as "parity would then cease to have any meaning."[1]

The Congress insisted that it was a national and not a communal organization. Though Gandhi had conceded in a statement that it was "overwhelmingly Hindu", there were many non-Hindus, including Muslims, who counted themselves as Congressmen. The President, Abul Kalam Azad, was himself a Muslim. Besides, there were many Muslim political organizations, which neither agreed with the political creed of the League nor acknowledged the leadership of Jinnah. The most important of the non-League Muslims were the Unionists of the Panjab, represented by Khizr Hyat Tiwana at the Conference. Multi-communal in character, the Unionist Party enjoyed some support among the Panjab Muslims and their leader demanded a seat for a Panjabi Mussalman to be nominated by his party.

The Viceroy formally asked the President of the League to submit a panel of names in a letter written by his Secretary :

"Dear Mr. Jinnah,

The following is the action which His Excellency would like you to take, if, after consultation with your Working Committee, you are able to accept the suggestion he made at this morning's meeting of the Conference.

1. To prepare and send him a list giving the names of members of the Muslim League, who, in

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1 "*Times of India*" June 29, 1945.

your opinion, could suitably be included in the proposed Executive Council. The number of names in this list should not be less than eight or more than twelve.

2. If you think you can usefully suggest, for possible inclusion in the Executive Council, the names of persons of any community who are not members of the Muslim League, you are at liberty to add them to your list, keeping them distinct from the names of Muslim League members.

His Excellency's intention is to scrutinize the lists sent to him and to see whether from them and possibly from additional names of his own, he can, on paper, form the Executive Council acceptable to the parties and to His Majesty's Government. If so, he will consult leaders, including yourself, and thereafter decide whether it is worth while making definite proposals to the Conference."[1]

Gandhi, who was all the time closely connected with all that was going on in Simla, now came out with his proclamation some times referred to as the "Gandhi formula." The Congress, he said, should reduce its representation on the Council in order to give more seats to the minorities. The League, he declared, should be admitted to its due share. It is a matter of speculation as to what would have happened were the Congress Working Committee to adopt this offer,[2] but the gulf between the League and the Congress had widened to such an extent that the

1 Letter addressed to Jinnah, June 29, 1945.

2 The Congress Working Committee rejected it on July 5th, 1945

League leaders considered it as a shift from the basis of parity. It was pointed out that Gandhi's offer was an attempt at circumventing the community-wise basis of the Conference. "Having swallowed parity between Hindus and Muslims" said a Muslim League spokesman, "and thereby accepted the communal equation, we expect the Congress to go a step further and concede the Muslim claim to nominate the entire Muslim bloc." Significantly enough, it was being stated in the League quarters that the Congress, by insisting upon its national character, was bidding farewell to the last opportunity to settle with the Muslims.[1]

At this time some splitter groups inspired by the Congress sent telegrams questioning Jinnah's leadership and the Muslim League's claim to nominate the Muslim quota. A. K. Fazlul Haq who had been expelled from the Muslim League joind the chorus. There was however no doubt that the bulk of the Muslims stood behind the League and Jinnah.

On 6 July, Jinnah presided over the meeting of the League Working Committee. With the exception of Mawlana Akram Khan, who could not attend due to ill health, all the other twenty one members were present.[2] Sir Muhammad Saadullah and Sir Ghulam

1 "*Times of India*" July 3rd, 1945,

2 Following were the Members of the Working Committee :

1 Nawwābzādah Liaquat Ali Khan. 2 Nawwāb Muhammed Ismail Khan. 3 Chaudhri Khaliquz Zaman. 4 Raja of Mahmudabad. 5 Nawwāb Iftikhar Hussain of Momdot, 6 Mian Bashir Ahmad. 7 Shaikh Karamat Ali. 8 Sardar Aurangzeb Khan. 9 Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar. 10 Qazi Muhammad Isa. 11 G. M. Syed. 12 Khwaja Nazimuddin, 13 M. A. H. Ispahani, 14 Syed Hussain Imam. 15 Haji Abdus Sattar Ishaq Seth. 16 Abdul Matin Chaudhry. 17 I. I. Chundrigar. 18 Latifur Rehman. 19 Syed A. Raoof Shah. 20 Begum Mohammad Ali. 21 Mawlana Akram Khan.

Husain Hidayatullah attended by special invitation. The meeting was opened with a lengthy statement by the chair reviewing the whole situation. A long discussion, lasting for three hours, followed on the main issue whether the League should, or should not submit the panel. The deliberations were incorporated in a letter sent by the League President to the Viceroy :

"Dear Lord Wavell,

I placed before my Working Committee the suggestion made by your Excellency at the last meeting of the Conference and communicated to me by your Private Secretary in his letter dated 29th June, 1945. The Working Committee, after careful consideration, desire me to convey to you their views which are :

"1. With regard to your suggestion for submitting a panel of names of the members of the Muslim League for inclusion in the proposed Executive Council, the Working Committee desires to point out that when a similar proposal was made by your Excellency's predecessor, Lord Linlithgow, he dropped the proposal and suggested another alternative in his letter dated 25th September, 1940, addressed to the President of All-India Muslim League, an extract from which is given below.

"I appreciate, however, the difficulties which, as you made it clear to me, confronted you in connection with the formulation of the panel which I had earlier suggested to you, and in the light of our discussion

I am content that the selection of representatives while resting with the Governor-General, should be based, in the case of the Muslim League (and, should they so desire, of the parties to be represented in my Council) not on a panel formally submitted, but on confidential discussion between the leader of the party concerned and myself.

"The alternative was acceptable to the Muslim League. The Working Committee is of the opinion that the procedure settled on the previous occasion should be followed in the present so far as the Muslim League is concerned.

"2. Further the Working Committee is emphatically of the opinion that all the Muslim members of the proposed Executive Council should be chosen from the Muslim League, subject to the confidential discussion between your Excellency and the President of the Muslim League, before they are finally recommended by you to the Crown for appointment. The Working Committee feels very stongly on this point and regards it as one of the fundamental principles.

"3. Besides the foregoing, certain other points were also discussed in the Working Committee, particularly the question of an effective safeguard against unfair decisions of the majority. While the Committee appreciated the remarks in the statement of the Secretary of State in the House of Commons that the power of veto will be exercised by the Viceroy to protect the minority interests, it was felt that some other effective safeguard would be necessary in the interest of smooth working of the interim arrange-

ment. It was, however, thought that this question could be settled after the strength and the composition of the Executive Council was decided upon.

"I have given in the above paragraphs the unanimous opinion of my Working Committee and I am ready and willing, if you so desire, to meet you and explain the reasons and grounds for the decision arrived at the Working Committee."[1]

The Viceroy invited Jinnah to meet him on 8 July in the afternoon. The League President reiterated the claim of his party to nominate all Muslims and asked the Viceroy to give an assurance about a safeguard against the Council reaching decisions detrimental to Muslim interests or prejudicial to the goal of Pakistan. He also sought information on the allocation of portfolios to the members of the proposed Council. After the interview, when approached by a journalist, Jinnah seemed to be very calm. In the evening he attended a reception and made a speech which displayed his immense confidence in himself and in the attitude of the League: We are in the midst of confidential talks and negotiations . . . The complete picture has not yet emerged . . . In this Conference we are in the position of advisers . . . When the true picture emerges, it will have to be ratified by us . . . We are not laying down the future constitution . . . After all this is only a stop-gap arrangement.''

The Viceroy's formal letter followed the next day :

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1 Jinnah's letter to the Viceroy, Jnly 7th, 1945.

"Dear Mr. Jinnah,

At the end of our talk yesterday evening you said that I could make your problem easier if I replied in writing to your letter of 7th July. I do not think you expect any comment now on the first and third points in that letter. Our talk was concerned mainly with the second point, that all the Muslim members of the proposed Executive Council should be chosen from the Muslim League . . . before they are finally recommended to the Crown for appointment.

"I fully appreciate your difficulties but regret that I am unable to give you the guarantee you wish i.e. that all the Muslim members of the proposed new Council shall necessarily be the members of the Muslim League. As I explained to you, I cannot commit myself to give a similar guarantee to any other party. I have to attempt to form an Executive Council representative, competent and generally acceptable. But, of course, I cannot compel any person or any party to co-operate in my solution if they do not wish to do so.

It will help me greatly if you will let me have names from the Muslim League and I sincerely hope you will do so. I asked for eight, but will certainly accept five if you do not wish to send more. You can consider later whether any solution I put forward is acceptable to you.

During the next two or three years decisions of great importance will have to be taken by the Government of India, whatever its composition may

be. These decisions—on demobilization, economic development, taxation, trade and so on—cannot wait, and it is the hope of His Majesty's Government that the Executive Council responsible for them will be one in which the major political parties are represented. It will be, of course, my principal duty to see fair-play between all parties not only in the composition of the proposed Council but in its working.

I need the active help of your colleagues and yourself, and I am sure you will give it to me. I have no objection to your showing this letter to your colleagues, but it is not intended for publication."[1]

The Working Committee considered the letter with the scrutiny and attention it deserved and came to the conclusion that the Viceroy had declined to accept their demands. It was eventually decided that the League should withhold its co-operation.

"Dear Lord Wavell", ran another letter from the League President on the same date, "I thank you very much for your letter of the 9th July, which I placed before my Working Committee. The Committee, after giving its very careful consideration to the matter, desires me to state that it regrets very much to note that your Excellency is not able to give the assurance that all the Muslim members of the proposed Executive Council will be selected from the Muslim League. In my letter of the 7th July I mentioned that the Committee considers this as one of the fundamental principles and in the circumstances, I

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1 Letter from Wavell to Jinnah, July 9th 1945.

regret, I am not in a position to send the names on behalf of the Muslim League for inclusion in the proposed Executive Council, as desired by you."[1]

While these developments were taking place, the Congress had been at work. Some of its leaders were negotiating with the Unionists, Sikhs and the other minorities. The Working Committee met on the 3rd and 4th of July and Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani attended by special invitation. The finalization of the panel took three days more and Abul Kalam Azad submitted it on the evening of the 7th.[2]

The Viceroy invited Jinnah for another talk on the 11th. Before meeting Lord Wavell, Jinnah was authorized by the Working Committee to accept and act upon any verbal assurances the Viceroy might offer regarding the formation and working of the interim government which did not prejudice the goal of Pakistan. The interview did not last long. The Viceroy asked if there was any change in the policy of the League. Jinnah replied in the negative. The Viceroy then showed him a list of names and enquired if that would be acceptable. The list included four Muslim Leaguers and one Unionist Muslim four Congressites and one Mahasabahite Hindu; One Sikh, one from the Scheduled Castes and one Indian Christian. It was perhaps, the hope of the Viceroy that as he had fashioned the panel after the Liaquat-Desai formula of parity between the Congress and

1 Letter from Jinnah to Wavell, July 9th, 1945.

2 According to the report of the Free Press correspondent, the Congress submitted a panel of sixteen names of which three were Muslim Leaguers.
See Ashoka. Mehta and K. Nair: *op*; *cit*; pp. 33-34.

the League,[1] Jinnah might give in. Jinnah, on the other hand, insisted that he could not agree

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1 After the 1944 autumn session of Central Legislative Assembly, Bhulabhai Desai met Liaquat Ali Khan to discuss the political deadlock and the prevailing social and economic distress in the country. During the conversation, Desai suggested that some interim arrangement for the reconstitution of the Viceroy's Executive Council should be jointly advanced by the Congress and the League. Liaquat agreed to the proposal in principle, adding that any counter proposals too should be carefully considered by the two bodies.

Desai and Liaquat met again at Delhi on 3 and 4 of January, 1945. A week later (11-1-45) Desai handed over to Liaquat a document entitled "Proposals for the formation of Interim Government at the Centre." Liaquat remarked the proposals could be made a "basis for discussion" and told Desai that he should get Gandhi's approval to the draft and then approach Jinnah for a final settlement.

The document read as under :

"The Congress and the League agree that they will join in forming an interim Government at the Centre. The composition of such Government will be on the following lines :

(a) Equal number of persons nominated by the Congress and the League in the Central Executive. Persons nominated need not be memebers of the Central Legislature.

(b) Representations of minorities (in particular Scheduled Castes and the Sikhs) to be included.

(c) The Government will be formed and will function within the framework of the existing Government of India Act. It is, however, understood that if the Cabinet cannot get a particular measure passed by the Legislative Assembly they will not enforce the same by resort to any of the reserve powers of the Governor-General or the Viceroy. This will make them sufficiently independent of the Governor-General.

It is agreed between the Congress and the League that if such interim Government is formed, their first step would be to release the Working Committee members of the Congress.

The steps by which efforts would be made to achieve this end are at present indicated to take the following course :

On the basis of the above understanding some way should be found to get Governor-General to make a proposal or a suggestion that he desires an interim Government to be formed in the Centre on the agreement between the Congress and the League and when the Governor-General invites Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Desai either jointly or separately, the above proposal would be made, desiring that they are prepared to join the Government.

(Continued on page 235)

to the inclusion of a Muslim other than those nominated by the League. Viceroy remarked that the League's claim could not be recognized as there were many Muslims outside the League, and that his plan had aimed at parity between the caste Hindus and the Muslims and not between the former and the Muslim Leaguers. He asserted that in any case it was for him to make the final choice.

At this, Jinnah left the Viceregal Lodge. The interview had lasted for fifteen minutes only.

Lord Wavell then called Gandhi in the afternoon. As the news spread that Gandhi and not Abul Kalam Azad was to meet the Viceroy, a witticism went around Simla that the priest and not the doctor had been invited. It sounded like the death-knell of the Conference. Gandhi was frank in his advice, and suggested that the authorities should go either with the League or the Congress. But the general impression was the Viceroy would not make any move without the consent of both the parties.

The Conference met for the last time on the 14th. The Viceroy made a formal announcement that

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(Continued from page 234)

The next step would be to get the withdrawal of Section 93 in the Provinces and to form as soon as possible Provincial Governments on the lines of a coalition."

Though the proposals were to be treated as "strictly private and confidential" by Liaquat Ali Khan, the Congress press started propagating that a confidential pact was in existence. Liaquat Ali Khan denied the existence of any pact both in his public statements and on the floor in the Central Assembly. Bh labhai Desai did not refer to it till he was drawn out into a public controversy about its nature after the failure of the Simla Conference

See Press statement : Liaquat Ali Khan, 31st August and 18th September 1945, Bhulabhai Desai, 16 September, 1945.

it had failed to implement the plan broadcast by him a month earlier. He took the responsibility of the failure upon his own shoulders, saying "I wish to make it clear that the responsibility for failure is mine. The main idea underlying the Conference was mine. If it had succeeded, its success would have been attributed to me, and I cannot place the blame for its failure upon any of the parties. I expect the party leaders to accept this view, and to do all they can to ensure that there are no recriminations."

But the appeal did not have any effect. The Congress leaders launched a full-scale attack on the League and the League leaders had to issue statements in self-defence.[1]

Jinnah issued a statement on the evening of the 14th in which he recapitulated the League's attitude, made public the League's view of the nature of the Wavell plan and reiterated the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims :

"On a final examination of the Wavell plan, we found that it was a snare. There was the combination consisting the Gandhi Hindu Congress who stand for India's Hindu National Independence as one India,

1 For a typical attack of the Congress leaders on Jinnah at this time, see a report published in the "*Bombay Chronicle*" dated July 21, 1945. As a matter of fact, the "nationalist" Press had initiated a campaign of vilification against him even before the Simla Conference, and now the Hindu Press became more and more hostile. Column after column of these newspapers used to be full of vituperative and abusive language. They circulated baseless rumours calculated to lower the popularity and the prestige of the leading figures in the League circles. The Muslim Press, especially in the Panjab and Bengal, tried to counter this virulent propaganda.

and the latest exponents of geographical unity, Lord Wavell, and Glancy-Khizr, who are bent upon creating disruption among the Mussalmans in the Punjab. We are sought to be pushed into this arrangement, which, if we had agreed to, as proposed by Lord Wavell, we should have signed our death warrant.

"Let us honestly examine the Wavell Plan. Our stand has been, and we have repeatedly made it clear to the British Government, times out of number since 1940 that we cannot consider or enter into any provisional Interim Government unless a declaration is made by the British Government guaranteeing the right of self-determination of Muslims and pledging that, after the war, or soon as it may be possible, the British Government would establish Pakistan, having regard to the basic principles laid down in the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League, passed in 1940. This was the first condition precedent to our considering any provisional arrangement. Condition no. two was that we are not a minority, but a nation, and we can only enter into a provisional arrangement, having regard to the necessities and exigencies of the moment created by war and fully co-operate in the prosecution of the war and that in any arrangement, we claimed an equal number in the proposed Executive.

The Wavell proposals let at nought both these conditions and called upon us to make the severest sacrifice. I know, in his broadcast, he said that these proposals are without prejudice to any future constitution or constitutions of India. While in one

breath it is impressed upon us that these proposals are without prejudice and do not prejudge the Pakistan issue, yet, the plan, in fact, contradicts this in the next breath by its very terms. It is obvious to any intelligent man, that, if we accept this arrangement, the Pakistan issue will be shelved and put in cold storage indefinitely, whereas, the Congress will have secured under this arrangement what they want, namely, a clear road for their advance towards securing Hindu national independence of India because the future Executive will work as a unitary Government of India, and we know that this interim or provisional arrangement will have a way of settling down for an unlimited period and all the forces in the proposed Executive plus the known policy of the British Government and Lord Wavell's strong inclination for a united India, would completely jeopardise us. I will quote Mr. Amery, who has tried his best, but in the result has given us cold comfort. His statement is a very clear indication and a pointer to the British policy. Speaking in the House of Commons, where he presented the White Paper, he said as follows : 'The ideal to which we have always looked is that of an All India Union in which the States would play their full part. At the same time, we have also recognized the possibility that agreement between Hindus and Muslims on any form of Indian unity may be unattainable. Any interim advance, must in no way prejudge the question whether the ultimate settlement is based on a united or divided India.'

"Next in the proposed Executive, we would be reduced to minority of one-third. All the other

minorities such as Scheduled Castes, Sikhs and Christians have the same goal as the Congress. They have their grievances as minorities, but their goal and ideology is and cannot be different from or otherwise than that of a United India. Ethnically and culturally, they are very closely knitted to Hindu society.

"I am not against full justice being done to all minorities and they should be fully safeguarded and protected as such, wherever they may be. But in actual working and practice, invariably, their vote will be against us, and there is no safeguard for us except the Viceroy's veto, which, it is well known to any constitutionalist, cannot be exercised lightly as every-day business against majority decision with regard to policy and principles that will have to be laid down and measures adopted, both administrative and legislative.

"On top of this, came the last straw on the camel's back, that even about the five members of the Muslim bloc allotted to us community wise, which is the essence of Wavell proposals, we were told that the Muslim League was not entitled to nominate all the Muslim representatives as our chosen spokesmen; and there were two claims—the Congress claimed two, and Glancy-Khizr on behalf of the Punjab claimed one. This move on the part of these two went at the very root and the very existence of the Muslim League regarding its position, character and status. But finally we broke as Lord Wavell insisted upon his having one non-League nominee of Malik Khizr Hyat Khan representing the Punjab Muslims.

As I have said, it is only the blind who cannot see that the All-India Muslim League is the only authoritative organization of the Mussulmans. If we had accepted the position as presented to us by Lord Wavell, we would have emerged out of this Conference minus every thing, and we would have entirely betrayed our people. It would have been an abject surrender on our part of all we stand for, and it would have been a death knell to the Muslim League. This was the position which faced us and we found that it was impossible for us to accept this arrangement."

The final breakdown of the Simla Conference was due to the refusal of the British authorities and the Congress to recognise the All-India Muslim League as the sole representative body of the Muslims. Since the Lahore Resolution of 1940, the League had been working for the establishment of an independent sovereign state for the Muslims. The community, after quite a few frustrations in the past twenty years, had seen a ray of light in the shape of Pakistan. This resulted in more and more popularity for that organization, and Jinnah, the able and courageous exponent of Muslim Nationalism emerged as an all-powerful leader. The general elections to the various legislative bodies had not been held for more than eight years. There was no other recognized method to assess the real hold of the Muslim League on the Muslim electorate. In 1937, the Muslim electorate had not expressed itself clearly in favour of any party. But it made a good showing in the bye-elections. Between 1937 and 1943 of the 61 bye-elections to the

Muslim seats in the various Provincial Assemblies the League won 47, independent Muslims 4 and Congress Muslims only 2 ; and in the Central Assembly the League won all the 7 seats. Between 1943 and 1945 in the Provincial Assemblies the League won 8, independent Muslims 3 and Congress Muslims no seats ; in the Central Assembly the League won all the 4 seats. In the Panjab 20 Muslim members left the Unionist Party and formed the Muslim League Party. Since 1937 many Muslim members of the Legislative Assemblies had joined the League. The League leaders, it is apparent in retrospect, were fully confident of their new programme and insisted that they should be recognized as the spokesmen of their nation. The general elections which followed the conference fully vindicated their stand.

On the plane of political strategy, Jinnah considered the negotiations at Simla "in relation to the grand objective"—Pakistan ;[1] would a few seats on the Viceroys Executive Council bring the Muslims nearer to their objective ? He calculated that such an arrangement would not help. In a statement issued during the Conference he maintained that the Pakistan issue must be settled first.[2]

Why did the League then accept the Viceroy's invitation ? Because the acceptance would bring it a good opportunity of pressing its case regarding the constitutional issue, and of holding its own against the Congress. Since 1937, Jinnah had christened the

1 Lumby has also noted this. *op ; cit.* pp. 52-53.

2 "*Times of India*" June 30th, 1945.

Congress, a Hindu body and had been exerting himself to refute its exaggerated claims. He had been demonstrating to all political observers in India and Britain that the Congress did not, as a matter of deliberate policy, want to reach on understanding with the League about India's political future. He held that it was forcing the hands of the British into transferring power to the Hindu majority before quitting India and by-pass the Muslims and their claims. Jinnah's strategy at Simla was to assert the Muslim League's claims to be the representative body of the Muslims and to ensure that in the event of transfer of power under any interim arrangement the Muslim goal of Pakistan was not in any way prejudiced.[1]

The case for the Indian National Congress had been presented before the world opinion "in the most favourable light", partly because the Congress had, since its inception, given careful and serious attention to the propagation of its cause in foriegn countries, especially Britain and the United States, and partly due to the failure of the politically conscious section in those countries to appreciate the complex nature of India's problem. For a number of decades, the Congress and its spokesmen had been identified with the so called "Indian Nationalism" which in the final

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1 For a detailed study of the political stratenv of Jinnah in this connection, see my paper Jinnah and Muslim political Separatism. (*Proceeding of the Pakistan* History conference, 1965).

analysis cut across the interests and aspirations of the Muslims. The Muslim League, according to the Congress, was a political nuisance with a negative and obstructionist policy regarding the future political status of the country. In fact what was branded negative was the very essence of the Muslim claim to freedom.

The Congress demand for the inclusion of the "Nationalist Muslims" in the Council was unrealistic and unjustifiable. As early as 1934, Jawahar Lal Nehru had assessed their role and their position in the following words :

"There came a time when they (Nationalist Muslims) had nothing left to call their own, no fundamental principle on which they stood except one, and that had been the very sheet-anchor of their group : joint elections. But again the policy of the lesser evil presented the fatal choice to them, and they emerge from the ordeal minus that sheet-anchor. So today they stand divested of every shred of principle or practice on the basis of which they formed their group, and which they proudly nailed to their mast head of everything except their name. The collapse and elimination of the Nationalist Muslims as a group—as individuals they are still important leaders of the Congress—forms a pitiful story. It took many years, and the last chapter has only been written this year (1934)."[1]

Since these words were written the group had been almost completely wiped off for lack of a

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1 Quoted by Liaquat Ali Khan in his statement to the Press, July, 3rd 1945.

positive creed and public support. A few of them, like Azad were still influential as Congress leaders but their meagre following amongst the Muslims did not entitle them to separate representation in the proposed interim government. The Congress claims for this group were, therefore, untenable. By insisting upon their inclusion, the Congress exposed itself to the charge that it wanted to destroy Muslim solidarity. This error on the part of the Congress was always thoroughly exposed by Jinnah.

Did the Congress revoke its declared anti-British policy when it hurriedly consented to attend the conference and to comply with the Viceroy's demand for panel of names ? The Working Committee were conscious of the retrogressive step but they took refuge behind the haste with which they were released from the jails and invited to Simla. They maintained that they had no time to study the political situation, yet they passed a judgment by accepting the invitation. A face-saving device was Gandhi's immediate objection to the phrase "caste-Hindus". The abominable term had been used by a British Viceroy who had been taken to task for his indiscretion. The general Hindu attention was made to focus on a less vital issue while the leadership cased its conscience. Not a single important Congress leader ever declared that the acceptance of the invitations to Simla contradicted the Congress policy as declared in the Quit India Resolution of 1942. To confound the issues further, the Congress Working Committee reaffirmed the resolution with the polite reservation that 'no agitation would be started before the end of

the war'. This was, perhaps, the first time that the Congress, maddened by the desire for power, officially granted a formal lease of life to "British Imperialism" in India! In fact, the whole creed of non-co-operation was sacrificed by one stroke in the name of moderation and practical wisdom. Never was the insincerity of the Congress precepts made more manifest'. But these are moral and logical observations which usually are not supposed to have a place in the game of power politics!

On the whole, the Simla Conference was a significant milestone on the road leading to Pakistan. Failure high-lighted the power of the League as well as the fact that it could not be tempted away from the lure of office, and the path to the achievement of Pakistan was cleared.

NOTE ON PARITY.

Haji Muhammad Ismail, a trusted lieutenant of Syed Ahmad Khan and member of the United Provinces Legislative Council for some time, was the first Muslim leader who enunciated the concept of parity of representation between Hindus and Muslims. In a letter addressed to Rahmatullah Sayani, the Congress President, the Haji suggested that the Congress should adopt a resolution to the effect that "on the councils of the Government and in Municipal and local Boards the Hindus and Mussulmans may have an equal number of elected members."[1]

1 The text was published in the "*Moslem Chronicle*", January 9th 1897 See also the United Provinces Administration Report, 1897.

The Congress, however, did not agree. Sayani said in his Presidential Address that "so long as Mussalmans did not join the Congress movement in the same number and with the same enthusiasm as the Hindus do, the Congress cannot in fairness be asked to carry out such a suggestion in the manner and to the extent indicated . . . . ".

About a decade later when the idea of including an Indian in the Viceroy's Executive council was mooted the private correspondence between Minto and Morley contained a number of references to parity. Morley maintained that if a Hindu was to be included in the Executive Council, the Muslims, who were already agitating for greater and separate representation on the legislative councils, would demand a seat for their representatives in the Council. Minto, on the other hand, held that the selection should only be on the basis of ability, efficiency and suitability and that the issue should not be given a communal tinge. Eventually Minto's view prevailed but Morley appointed Bilgrami to his Council at the India Office. This was generally approved by the Muslims and public meetings were held in many towns of the United Provinces to thank the authorities.[1]

In the addresses presented to E. S. Montagu on his visit to India (1917) almost all the Muslim organizations, with the exception of the All-India Muslim League, demanded parity with Hindus on

1 See *Morley-Minto correspondence* at the India Office library (MSS volumes) ; and bundles of the private papers of Lord Minto at the National Library of Scotland. Edinburgh.

the Executive Councils, both Central and Provincial. The All-India Muslim League entered into a Pact with the Congress in 1916 according to which the Congress agreed to representation of Muslims in the legislatures through separate electorate and on the basis of weightage for them in the Hindu majority provinces.

It may therefore be noted that the British declaration of parity between Caste-Hindus and the Muslims was not a new political concept as some of the contemporary commentators tried to interpret it 1945.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY.

The establishment of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College by Syed Ahmed Khan has already been dealt with in a previous volume. The College, enjoying as it did the material and moral support of the Muslim public and the patronage of the Government, soon developed into an important educational institution and made a vital and valuable contribution to the educational progress and social uplift of the Muslims. The establishment of a College had, however, never been regarded by the founder and his co-workers as an end; it was merely the first step leading to the creation of a University. As early as 1877, in an address presented by the M. A. O. College Fund Committee to Lord Edward Robert Lytton, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, on the occasion of his laying the foundation-stone of the College, the members of the Committee expressed the hope that "this College may expand into a University whose sons shall go forth throughout the length and breadth of the land to preach the gospel of free enquiry, of large-hearted toleration, and of pure morality."[1]

Ever since its inception the M. A. O. College was rendering valuable service to the cause of Muslim

1 *Collection of Addresses and Their Replies* compiled by Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and later brought up to-date by Abul Hassan (M. U. Press—1922), p. 30.

education, but its founder, his illustrious son, Syed Mahmud, and his co-workers always kept the objective of transforming it into a University before them. Soon after the death of Syed Ahmad Khan (March, 1898), the Board of Management of the College established a "Sir Syed Memorial Fund Committee" and nominated Mohsin-ul-Mulk as its President. The purpose of the creation of this Committee was to build a University in memory of the venerable educationist and to raise funds for that purpose. In the initial stage, a sum of Rs. 10 lakhs was fixed as the target. Mohsin-ul-Mulk, a forceful writer and speaker, took up the proposal in right earnest and began to give it wide publicity. He issued an appeal for funds, toured the country, addressed public meetings and set up committees in different places for raising donations. In order to mobilise public opinion and focus the attention of the Muslims on the need for a national University the matter was placed before the Mohammedan Educational Conference again and again and resolutions supporting the proposal were repeatedly adopted.

In December, 1898, at the twelfth Session of the Conference held at Lahore, resolutions were passed supporting the proposal for the establishment of a separate University for the Muslims and urging the creation of sub-committees in different towns for the purpose of furthering the implementation of the project.[1] A resolution was also adopted emphasising the necessity of introducing compulsory religious

1 *Proceedings of the All-India Mohammedan Educational Conference* Muslim University Press, Aligarh, 1935, p. 69.

education in the proposed Muslim University.[1] These resolutions were sponsored by eminent men like Mian Mohammad Shah Deen, Barkat Ali Khan, Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan and Mohsin-ul-Mulk, and were passed with acclaim.

In December, 1902, the sixteenth session of the Educational Conference was held at Delhi. It was convened at such a time as to coincide with the Durbar held at Delhi by Lord Curzon to celebrate the coronation of King Edward VII and was consequently exceptionally well attended by important personalities. His Royal Highness Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan III, who had been elected to preside over the session delivered a memorable presidential address. After analysing the causes of the moral and intellectual decline of the Muslims he declared that instead of shedding tears they should make a concerted endeavour to pull their people out of the morass and that the first and most important step for achieving this goal was the establishment of a residential University, where Muslim youth, besides acquiring modern knowledge, should be acquainted with the grandeur of their past and the tenets of their religion and where greater emphasis should be laid on character building than on examinations. He visualised this University as a Muslim Oxford which should attract bright and promising students not only from India but from other countries, such as Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, not merely for the acquisition

1 Proceedings *op. cit.*, p. 69.

of modern arts and sciences but for developing the spirit of self-sacrifice and integrity which characterised the Muslims of the first century of the Hijrah era. He estimated that the creation of such a University would cost a crore of rupees and added that the collection of the amount was by no means difficult for a community numbering 60 million. In the end he appealed to his audience to devote their financial resources, time and energy to the accomplishment of this task.[1]

The Conference reiterated its previous resolutions regarding the necessity of establishing a Muslim University and adopted a resolution urging the creation of provincial committees, under the Sir Syed Memorial Fund Committee, for the collection of donations. From this time onwards all schemes for expanding and developing the M. A. O. College were really designed to further the project of transforming it into a University. It may be specially mentioned in this connection that the study of science attracted very few students in those days and had been hitherto neglected by the authorities of the College. It was after 1902 that the study of science began to receive due attention and by 1906 the Science Departments were properly developed[2]. As the College grew and prospered its dependence on the provincial directorate of education and a distant University, in the running of which Muslims had hardly any share, became

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1 *Presidential Addresses of the Mohammedan Educational Conference* entitled "*Khuṭabāt-i-'Āliyah*"—Muslim University Press—1927 pages 206-218.

2 *Prince Aga Khan*—edited by Muhammad Amin Zuberi and published by Ismailia Association, Karachi, January, 1951—page 55.

more and more irksome. The College could neither prescribe the courses of studies for its students nor conduct its own examinations; in fact, it had to follow the policies laid down by the University from time to time. The handicap under which the College laboured is referred to in the following terms by Mawlana Mohamed Ali, who was one of its most distinguished alumni :—

> "No doubt the ancillary position in which Aligarh stood as a College affiliated to a purely examining University rigorously neutral in religion and wholly colourless in its learning—unless one may call it Western and English—did not permit it any efflorescence and orientation in the direction of more specialised Muslim culture and Eastern lore, such as one would expect from an educational institution mainly and primarily intended for Indian Mussalmans."[1]

In November, 1910, Vaqar-ul-Mulk, who had succeeded Mohsin-ul-Mulk in 1907 as Secretary of the College, wrote to the Aga Khan, who was at the time residing in England, and submitted to him certain proposals for the expansion of the College. In his reply the Aga Khan urged on the Secretary the necessity of concentrating all energy on raising the College to the status of a University and promised to visit Aligarh on his return to India. Accordingly, in the following month he came to Aligarh and held

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1 Mohamed Ali— *My Life*—A Fragment published by Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, September, 1946, pages 28 & 29.

consultations with the Secretary and the other Trustees of the College.

In the address which was presented to the Aga Khan on this occasion by the Trustees it was explained that hundreds of applications for admission to the College were refused every year "for want of sufficient accommodation in our Boarding Houses and lecture rooms and on account of insufficiency of the teaching staff." The Trustees also thanked His Highness for the "memorable share" he had always taken "in forwarding the cause of our national ideal of raising this College to the status of a Mohammedan University."[1] In his reply the Aga Khan said : "I am glad to see that so many princes, *nawabs*, *raises*, and leaders have lately contributed large sums of money to the College. But our hopes and dreams--I hope practical dreams of our mighty University worthy of Islam in India--depend on not only every Muslim prince and leader, but the well-to-do bourgeois of every town and village should enthusiastically wake up by the influence of religion and love of Islam to come forward and raise this College to the status of a great University."[2]

Immediately after his visit to Aligarh the Aga Khan proceeded to Nagpur to preside over the All-India Mohammedan Educational Conference. In his presidential address he referred to the impending coronation Durbar of King George V in Delhi and declared that every effort should be made to obtain

1 *Addresses*—pages 226-29.
2 *Ibid.*, pp. 230-31.

on that occasion a charter for the proposed University from the Government. He also announced his personal donation of a lakh of rupees for the University fund. Though the proposal to secure a charter speedily did not prove feasible, certain important practical steps were taken during the year 1911 for the realisation of that long-cherished goal.

In January, 1911, a Central Foundation Committee was set up, with the Aga Khan as the President and Vaqar-ul-Mulk as the Secretary. Ten provincial committees were also created which were to work in accordance with the directions of the Central Committee. Leading men from different walks of life were nominated on these committees, so that they may command influence in their respective areas. In February, 1911, a Constitution Committee for the purpose of drafting the Act, Statutes and Regulations was established with Raja Mohammad Ali Mohammad Khan of Mahmudabad as the President, Shams al-Ulama Syed Ali Bilgrami as the Secretary and Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad as the Joint Secretary.

Under the guidance of the Central Foundation Committee the task of raising funds was taken in hand in right earnest and several deputations for the purpose of touring the country were organised. These deputations included men of eminence like Vaqar-ul-Mulk, the Raja of Mahmudabad and Aftab Ahmad Khan; the Aga Khan himself led a deputation to several important places, like Allahabad, Lukhnow and Lahore. Mawlana Shaukat Ali, who was in government service at the time, took two years' leave

to devote himself heart and soul to this work.[1] Wherever these deputations went they were warmly and enthusiastically received and the people, high and low, rich and poor, contributed generously to the University fund. The Muslim press joined in the campaign by writing editorials and special articles, and leading personalities, including even religious dignitaries, issued appeals supporting the movement. This was a far cry from the days when Syed Ahmed Khan had first raised his voice in favour of modern education and had thereby brought on his head the wrath and curses of a large section of his co-religionists.

The Nizam of Hyderabad sanctioned a grant of rupees five lakhs, while the Rulers of Bhopal, Rampur, Khairpur and Bahawalpur donated rupees one lakh each. The bulk of the money was, however, contributed by different sections of the public-landlords, business magnates, lawyers and government servants, clerks and petty shop-keepers, labourers and peasants. The rich gave out of their wealth and the poor out of their poverty; the donations ranged from rupees one lakh to a few annas. By the end of 1912, twenty six lakhs of rupees had been contributed to the University fund, while the total amount promised exceeded rupees forty-one lakhs. By the beginning of 1915, the sum of rupees thirty lakhs, fixed by the

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1 The Aga Khan refers to Shaukat Ali as "my honorary private secretary and my right-hand man throughout the campaign".

The *Memoirs of Aga Khan*—published by Cassell & Co,, London, 1945 p. 151.

Government of India as the condition precedent for a University charter, had already been realised.

The work of the Constitution Committee was by no means so smooth. After it had worked for a few months on the task entrusted to it a deputation on its behalf met Sir Harcourt Butler, Education member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, in May, 1911, placed before him formally the proposal for the establishment of a University and discussed with him important details of the draft constitution. Sir Harcourt promised to forward the proposal to the Secretary of State for India and in due course to furnish the Committee with the latter's reaction. In July, he informed the Raja of Mahmudabad, President of the Committee, that the proposal for the creation of a University would be approved by the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India, provided the Committee could show that adequate funds for the purpose had been raised, and provided the constitution of the University was acceptable to the Government. He also made certain suggestions for the revision of the constitution.

The draft constitution was revised carefully and in August the amended draft was submitted to the Government, released to the press and published in the form of a booklet. The object of publishing it was to elicit criticisms and suggestions from the public. All the Universities hitherto established in the sub-continent were government institutions ; this was the first attempt to found a national University,[1]

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1 Mrs. Annie Besant and some Hindu educationists had started a similar campaign for establishing a Hindu University at Banaras.

and therefore it was necessary to take into account the ideas and aspirations of the people.

In September a deputation of the Constitution Committee met Harcourt Butler again. This time the discussion centred on the powers of the Viceroy, whom it was proposed to make the Chancellor ex-officio. It was suggested on behalf of the government that his advice, if repeated for the second time, should be binding on the governing body and that the appointment of Professors should be made after obtaining his approval. The members of the deputation agreed with the first suggestion but took exception to the second. After considerable discussion the Education Member undertook to refer back the second suggestion to the Secretary of State for India for reconsideration.

The draft of the Act was revised in the light of discussions with Harcourt Butler and the Statutes and Regulations were prepared by Sub-Committees set up for the purpose, but before the Constitution Committee had finalised its deliberations, a press communique was issued by the Government of India in the month of July, 1912, to the effect that the jurisdiction of the Universities of Aligarh and Banaras would be confined to the cities in which they would be located. This communique created widespread public resentment and was bitterly criticised by the Muslim press.[1] A

1 The reaction amongst the Hindus was also strong, but after some time their leaders decided to accept a Charter on the terms laid down by the Government. The Hindu University Act was passed in October, 1915, and the University came into existence in February, 1916.

meeting of the Constitution Committee was called on 11 August to consider, along with other matters, the contents of the communique, but on the 10th—*i. e.*, just a day prior to the meeting—the situation took a new turn. A lengthy telegram was received from Harcourt Butler by the Raja of Mahmudabad setting forth in detail the decisions of the Secretary of State and the Government of India on certain vital issues. This telegram explained that the jurisdiction of the University would be restricted to a small area and it would not enjoy the right of affiliating Colleges and Schools outside its territorial limits. It informed the Raja that the Viceroy would not be the Chancellor of the University, which would have the right of electing its own Chancellor, and the powers which it was proposed to entrust to the Chancellor should be entrusted to the Governor-General in Council. Even the name of Muslim University was objected to and the name Aligarh University was proposed instead. The Education Member further said that the whole question of distribution of powers between the various authorities of the University needed further examination and advised the Committee to revise the draft constitution in the light of the views expressed in his telegram.

On 11 and 12 August the Committee met, according to schedule, at Lukhnow and a number of fiery speeches were delivered expressing indignation at the new attitude adopted by the Government. The people hoped to see at Aligarh a Muslim University affiliating a number of Colleges and Schools throughout the length

and breadth of India, prescribing their syllabi, examining their students and awarding them degrees, diplomas and certificates. They did not want their educational institutions to be affiliated to the Government Universities which were secular and ruled out religious education. They wanted their rising generations to receive instruction in their religion and to be brought up as good Muslims. They desired the University to be the apex of a network of institutions throughout the sub-continent following its policies and moulded in a common pattern. They felt—and felt strongly—that a University the jurisdiction of which was confined to a radius of a few miles round Aligarh would not be the University of their dreams. The educationists were also anxious to safeguard the autonomy of the University, though they were prepared to entrust certain powers to the Viceroy as Chancellor.

On the other hand, the Government was prepared to grant a Charter for a unitary, residential and teaching University—without a denominational label. It argued, in the telegram referred to above, that a University enjoying the right of affiliating institutions throughout India would come into clash with other Universities. Moreover, it would find it difficult to exercise proper control over distant educational institutions, which would not be able to build up the distinctive traditions characteristic of Aligarh.

The Committee adopted a strongly-worded resolution expressing disagreement with the limitation imposed on the jurisdiction of the University,

elimination of the word Muslim from its name, and transfer of powers from the Chancellor to the Governor-General in Council, and communicated its views to the Education Member through a letter prepared by a drafting sub-committee.

In December, 1912, a meeting of the Foundation Committee was held at Lukhnow in the Barah Dari of Qaiser Bagh, under the chairmanship of H. H. the Nawab of Rampur, and was attended by a number of leading men from different parts of the sub-continent. Through mismanagement a large number of irresponsible persons, including many school boys, had found their way into the Barah Dari. The debate was of a heated nature and the whole atmosphere of the gathering was tense, with the result that the meeting did not yield any fruitful results.

In July, 1913, the Foundation Committee was convened again but this time the meeting was held at Aligarh within the precincts of the M. A. O. College. The deliberations were conducted in a calm manner and a number of important resolutions were adopted. It was decided to create a 'Muslim University Association' consisting of two hundred representatives from different parts of India, to keep the University fund intact but to utilise the income derived from it for developing the College to the status of a University, and to send a deputation to the Education Member to place before him the views of the public.

In March, 1914, the Muslim University Association was formally registered. The following year the Raja of Mahmudabad wrote to the Government

requesting an interview for a representative deputation, but the request was turned down on the ground that unless the Muslims were prepared to accept the conditions laid down for the Hindu University no useful purpose would be served by such an interview. In December, 1915, an effort by the Mohammedan Educational Conference to send a deputation to the Education Member for the purpose of placing before him the views of the Conference also met with a similar fate.

In view of the unbending attitude of the Government many members of the Foundation Committee felt that the alternative lay between not having a University at all and having one on the terms indicated by the Government. Others were still in favour of continuing the struggle or at least postponing a decision. This section of opinion was, however, considerably weakened by the internment of the Ali Brothers at Chindwara under the Security of India Act. The Committee met on 10 April, 1916, at Lukhnow and decided that in view of the Government's attitude it had no option but to agree to the conditions laid down for the Hindu University. It, however, once more pressed on the Government the claim of the Muslim University to affiliate Muslim schools located outside its territorial limits. It also laid down certain conditions regarding the framing of the regulations. This attempt at a compromise failed as the Birtish Government of India was in no mood to negotiate or compromise. The Hindu leaders had already accepted a University

on its terms and, as World War I progressed, its attitude towards public movements greatly hardened.

On 8 April, 1917, the Foundation Committee met at Aligarh under the chairmanship of Prince Hamidullah Khan of Bhopal and after an acrimonious debate reiterated its resolution of the previous year regarding accepting a University of the same pattern as the Banaras Hindu University, but did not attach any conditions thereto. By this time a serious controversy had arisen between the European staff and the management of the M.A.O. College which led ultimately to the former's resignation in a body in 1918. The causes and course of the controversy lie outside the scope of this chapter, but it has to be noted that the sympathies of the British rulers of the sub-continent were on the side of the European staff and they looked with disfavour on the attitude taken up by the Board of Trustees. In any case, this dispute was partly responsible for the delay in the foundation of the University.

The end of the World War was followed, for reasons which need not be examined here, by political unrest throughout the sub-continent, and the Government was inclined to placate at least a section of Muslim opinion by expediting the establishment of the University. In January, 1920, the Muslim University Association met and reiterated the resolution of the Foundation Committee dated 8 April, 1917, and urged on the Goverment the necessity of expediting legislation in this behalf. It also appointed a sub-committee to revise the constitution. In

March the report of the sub-committee was placed before the Association and the amended draft of the constitution was adopted. In the same month this draft was discussed between the representatives of the Government and the University and an agreement on points of difference was reached.

On 27 August the Muslim University Bill was introduced in the Indian Legislative Council by Mian Sir Mohammad Shafi who had succeeded Sir Harcourt Butler as Education Member. Nawab Sayed Mohammad Ali, Secretary of the College, was nominated as a member of the Assembly to help Mohammad Shafi in piloting the Bill. After passing through the Select Committee the bill was finally passed by the Council on 9 September, 1920.

The Aligarh Muslim University Act (Act No. XL of 1920) and its Schedule (First Statutes of the University) constitute a more liberal document than the long-drawn controversy between the British Indian Government and the Muslim leaders might lead one to expect. They founded a teaching and residential University and confined its right of affiliating High Schools and Intermediate Colleges and of establishing and maintaining High Schools and other institutions to "such limits in the Aligarh district as may be laid down in the ordinances." Though the Government maintained its stand on the question of affiliation it gave in on other issues. The University was named the Aligarh Muslim University in keeping with Muslim sentiment, and the membership of the Court was confined to Muslims. The Governor-General

was given the position, ex-officio, of Lord Rector, but the only important power which was entrusted to the Lord Rector was that of causing an inspection to be made of the University and of institutions maintained by it.

The Court was made the supreme governing body of the University. The first Chancellor, the first Pro-Chancellor and the first Vice-Chancellor were to be appointed by the Governor-General, but the Court was given the right of electing their successors and of appointing the Pro-Vice-Chancellor. The election of the Vice-Chancellor by the Court was, however, subject to the approval of the Governor-General in Council. In regulating the admission of students, conduct of examinations, framing the syllabi and courses of studies, appointment of teachers and other matters pertaining to the furtherance of its objects as a seat of learning, the University was given ample powers and was free from Government control.

Within a few weeks of the passing of the Act a fresh hurdle appeared. As has already been mentioned, the sub-continent was seething with political unrest. The forces behind the Khilafat agitation and the non-co-operation movement had joined hands for the purpose of bringing the Government down to its knees. One of the items in the programme of civil disobedience launched was the boycott of government and government-aided educational institutions. As the M.A.O. College fell in the latter category and as it had a unique importance, a

number of the most influential leaders of the movement, including Gandhi, Satya Deo, Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali, descended on Aligarh on 11 October and appealed to the students to join in making their programme a success.[1] The speeches of Gandhi and Satya Deo evoked hardly any response, but the impassioned appeals of the Ali Brothers ultimately succeeded in sweeping the students off their feet. On 13 October, the bulk of the students absented themselves from their classes, assembled in front of the students Union and passed a resolution calling upon the Trustees to give up Government grant and terminate the affiliation of the College to the Allahabad University by 29 October, failing which they would use all the means within their power to see that the College became "a national institution" under the Central Khilafat Committee.

On 14 October a letter signed by nine Trustees, including Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali, was sent to the Secretary of the College, containing similar demands, namely refusal of Government aid and disaffiliation from the Allahabad University by 29 October. In order to meet this two-pronged attack, the Principal, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed, and the Honorary Secretary, Sayed Mohammed Ali, took certain counter-measures. The College was closed on 26 October and the bulk of the students left for their homes. The Principal issued an appeal to a large number of Old Boys to assemble at Aligarh on 27 October and

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1 *Ziyā-i-Ḥayāt* by Mohd. Amin Zuberi—Din Mohammadi Press, Karachi, N. D.........pages 68 et seq.

150 of them responded to the appeal. On the same date a meeting of the Trustees was held and by a large majority they rejected the demands which had been put forward by the Ali Brothers.[1]

Even though they did not enjoy the support either of the Trustees—who alone were competent to take a decision regarding affiliation and Government grant—or the Old Boys, Mohamed Ali and some leading 'Ulama held a meeting in the College mosque, attended by a large crowd from the city, at which the Jamia Millia (National University) was formally opened. They also proceeded to enrol students for the new University and to instal them in the College hostels. All these operations were carried on from the Old Boys' Lodge, which had become the headquarters of Mohamed Ali and his associates.

A number of deputations of Trustees and Old Boys called on Mohamed Ali and tried to persuade him to desist from these activities and to vacate the Old Boys' Lodge and the hostel rooms, of which he had taken possession, but he point-blank refused to comply. When all methods of persuasion had failed the Syndicate of the College authorised the Secretary to seek the intervention of the district authorities. On the morning of 31 October, the district magistrate called upon Mohamed Ali and the newly enrolled students of the Jamia Millia to vacate the College premises. On the same day they moved from the Lodge and the boarding houses to the area across

1 Out of a total number of 62 present, 11 voted for the demands, 44 against them, and the rest abstained from voting.

the road known as Lal Diggi. This highly controversial episode thus came to an end, but it left its aftermath behind.

The Aligarh Muslim University Act, as has been mentioned, had been passed in September, but the date of its enforcement had been left to the Government of India. Under the prevailing conditions the authorities of the College as well as the Government realised the necessity of implementing it as soon as possible. After an unscheduled holiday of more than a month the College was due to re-open on 1 December and the same date was selected for giving effect to the Act. Thus when the students returned from their homes they learnt that their *aima mater* had been transformed into a University. Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal (Sultan Jehan Begum) and His Highness the Aga Khan, who had rendered memorable services to the cause of Muslim education, were appointed Chancellor and Pro-Chancellor respectively; the Raja of Mahmudabad, who had played an important part in the movement for raising the College to the status of a University, became the Vice-Chancellor,[1] and Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, the last Principal of the College, became the Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

The non-cooperation movement had convulsed Aligrah to its foundations and the Univessity started

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1 The Raja was also appointed Home Member in the U. P. Government and as it was difficult for him to find sufficient time for the work of a growing University he resigned from the post in February, 1923.

functioning with only 261 students.[1] The number of students who had left the M.A.O. College and joined the Jamia Millia was only about 100, but in view of recent events many parents decided not to send back their sons to Aligarh. As time passed, however, Aligarh began to recover its old position, and the number of students from all over the sub-continent began to increase.

The Act lays down that "there shall be Departments of Studies in the following branches of knowledge, namely:-

(i) English Language and Literature, (ii) History and Political Science, (iii) Economics, (iv) Philosophy and Psychology, (v) Physics, (vi) Chemistry, (vii) Mathematics and Astronomy, (viii) Geography, (ix) Sunni Theology, (x) Shia Theology, (xi) Islamic Studies, (xii) Arabic Language and Literature, (xiii) Persian, (xiv) Urdu, (xv) Law.

The Act also provides that "as soon as circumstances permit, there shall be Departments of Studies in the following branches of knowledge, namely:-

(i) Education, (ii) Botany, (iii) Zoology (iv) Agriculture, (v) Medicine, (vi) Commerce, (vii) Technology and "such other Departments as the Court, on the recommendation of the Academic Council, made through the Executive Council, may institute."

The University started functioning with Departments of Studies in History and Political Science,

1 Zuberi, *op. cit.*, page 109.

Economics, Philosophy and Psychology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Astronomy, Sunni Theology, Shia Theology, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English and Law; while the Departments of Botany, Zoology, Education, Geography, Islamic Studies, Hindi, Sanskrit were created within a few years of its foundation. In Geographical studies Aligarh must be regarded as the pioneer, as it was the first University in the sub-continent to give the subject due importance in its curricula by establishing a full-fledged Department of Geography in 1940 and by awarding the degrees of Bachelor and Master in that subject. As a result of this timely step the services of its alumni were requisitioned by a number of Universities and Colleges for the purpose of building up Departments of Geography.

The sponsors of the Aligarh movement and their successors did not approve of a system of secular education divorced from religion. They held that for the proper upbringing of Muslim youth moral training based on religious education was essential. The study of Theology was, therefore, made compulsory in the Intermediate, B. A. and B. Sc. classes for all Muslim students. Urdu was also made a compulsory subject for all under-graduates. It is hardly necessary to emphasise here the importance of Urdu as a lingua franca in undivided India, but it must be mentioned that as English was the medium of instruction the knowledge of Urdu facilitated intercourse between young men coming from different provinces and helped to develop the feeling of belonging to a

common fraternity. In the atmosphere thus created even post-graduate students had no difficulty in learning the language.

The Calcutta University Commission, of which Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad was a member, had recommended the separation of Intermediate classes from the University and the establishment of Intermediate Colleges. In pursuance of that recommendation the 9th and 10th classes of the school and the 1st and 2nd year classes of the University were amalgamated to constitute an Intermediate College, and a special Board was created to conduct the Intermediate and High School examinations.

In December, 1923, Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, who had been closely associated with the Aligarh movement since his youth, was elected Vice-Chancellor and took charge of his office on 1 January, 1924. By this time Aligarh had sufficiently recovered its position as the leading educational institution of the Muslims. The number of students was increasing rapidly, the hostels were full and the need for additional living space was being keenly felt, in spite of the conversion of the western wing of Syed Mahmud Court (Katchi Baarak) into a pucca, double-storeyed structure, known as the Osmania Hostel. The College library was rapidly developed and new stocks were acquired to make it worthy of a University. The famous Subhanullah Khan collection was presented by its owner to the University and this gift enriched the oriental section of the library with many rare books and manuscripts.

In 1925 an important event took place. Aftab Ahmad Khan, Ziauddin Ahmad and other persons responsible for the administration of the University felt that a concerted effort was needed to build up the institution and to focus on it the attention of the entire Muslim people. With this end in view they decided to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the foundation of Aligarh. It was in May, 1875, that the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental School, which quickly developed into a College and later into a University, had been founded. Originally it was proposed to celebrate the Jubilee in March, 1925, but in view of the elaborate arrangements that had to be made it was ultimately decided to postpone it till December.

Arrangements for the Jubilee were made on a grand scale. During the summer vacations deputations of students and teachers toured the country for the purpose of arousing public interest in the forthcoming celebrations and inviting leading Muslims to attend them. When the University re-opened after the vacations thousands of invitations to the function were issued on behalf of the Chancellor (Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal) and the Vice-Chancellor. Arrangement for the accommodation and board of several thousand guests in a small place like Aligarh was by no means easy. As all the guests expected could not be put up with students and teachers and in the houses requisitioned for them a large number of tents were erected.

The response from the invitees was splendid and showed that Aligarh still enjoyed a unique position

amongst the educational institutions of the sub-continent. It is estimated that seven thousand persons from far and near, belonging to different walks of life and different schools of political and religious thought, assembled on the occasion.[1] The sessions of the All-India Muslim League and the All-India Muslim Educational Conference[2] were also held at Aligarh during the Jubilee week and contributed to the success of the celebrations. Besides public meetings and lectures, elocution contests in English and Urdu and a series of games tournaments were arranged and drew debaters and sportsmen from a large number of Universities and Colleges. The celebrations helped to build up the position of Aligarh in the eyes of the public and to give a fresh stimulus to the feelings of attachment and devotion to the *alma mater* which the Old Boys had always cherished. Donations realised on the spot came to Rs. 1,76,000, while the promises amounted to Rs. 3,00,000.[3] The importance of the Jubilee, however, cannot be gauged from the amount of money raised on the occasion.

In 1926, a Tibbia College was established for promoting the study of Tibb-i-Unani and for furthering researches in that field. To begin with, it functioned under the auspices of the U. P. Board of Indian Medicine, which was responsible for conducting the

1 Zuberi, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

2 In 1923, the name of the "All-India Mohammedan Educational Conference" was changed to "All-India Muslim Educational Conference".

3 Zuberi, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

examinations and awarding the diplomas. Later on the College was placed directly under the University which took over the functions of the Board.

As the Aligarh Muslim University was not a government institution and depended largely on financial support by the public the framers of the Act felt that the Vice-Chancellor should be a person holding a prominent position in public life who could raise funds for the University. As it was possible that such a person may not be an expert in the field of education and in view of his public activities may not be able to devote his whole-hearted attention to the affairs of the University, the creation of the post of Pro-Vice-Chancellor was considered necessary.

The (First) Statutes laid down that "the Vice-Chancellor shall take rank next to the Chancellor and the Pro-Chancellor, and shall be ex-officio Chairman of the Executive Council and the Academic Council." They imposed on him the duty of seeing that "the Act, the Statutes, the Ordinances and the Regulations are duly observed" and invested him with "all powers necessary for that purpose." They also gave him the customary power to take action in cases of emergency and made him the sole medium of communication between the University on the one hand and the Governor-General in Council, the Lord Rector and the Visiting Board on the other. The Statutes also provided that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor shall be "a whole-time salaried officer" and shall be "the principal academic officer of the University."

They made him the chairman of the Academic Council in the absence of the Vice-Chancellor and empowered him to convene meetings of that body.

The act and the Statutes, in short, followed the pattern set by the Constitution of the M. A. O. College and installed the Vicc-Chancellor in the seat of the Secretary of the College and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor in the seat of the Principal. As has already been indicated, it was visualised that the Vice-Chancellor would be an honorary officer—a public figure enjoying the confidence of the Government and the esteem of the public and the Ruling Princes ; the Pro-Vice-Chancellor was expected to be an experienced educationist. In preparing the Ordinances and the Regulations these basic assumptions were kept in mind and, subject to the powers vested in the Academic Council, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor was made mainly responsible for the academic work of the University.

Even in the days of the first Vice-Chancellor (the Raja of Mahmudabad) a diversity of views between him and Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad had made itself felt, but before matters could come to a head the former resigned. Not long after the election of Aftab Ahmad Khan differences between him and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor appeared. The former complained of irregularities in the academic administration of the University, and wanted to rectify them ; the latter felt that the Vice-Chancellor was interfering in matters which lay outside his domain. In June, 1926, Aftab Ahmad Khan set up an Enquiry Committee, under his

emergency powers, to examine the working of the University and to ascertain whether the Rules and Regulations were being strictly observed. This Committee consisted of five persons--four University teachers as members and the Honorary Treasurer, Shaikh Abdullah, as Chairman. Early in September the Committee submitted its report to the Vice-Chancellor while he was at Mussoorie recuperating his health.

The report pointed out that there had been a certain amount of laxity in the observance of the Rules and Regulations and recommended that greater care should be exercised in future. Two of the specific issues raised by the Committee deserve special mention. It stressed the importance of restricting the number of admissions in order to avoid overcrowding in the hostels and emphasised the necessity of refusing admission to late-comers (i.e. those who applied after 5 November), as the practice of prolonging the admissions unduly caused dislocation in the teaching work of the University. The report contained useful recommendations but they could not be implemented on account of the growing cleavage between the Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor.[1]

Without going into details it might be noted that the clash of views between Aftab Ahmad Khan and Ziauddin Ahmad was of a fundamental nature. The former insisted on strict adherence to rules, the latter

1 *Ḥayāt-i-Āftāb* by Habibullah Khan—Asrar Karimi Press, (Allahabad) N. D. pages, 358—361.

maintained that rules could be disregarded in cases of hardship. One of the favourite maxims of Ziauddin Ahmad was "Rules are made for students; students are not made for rules." His biographer explains the conflict in these words : "In the eyes of the Sahibzadah principles took priority over expediency ; Doctor Sahib considered principles in the light of expediency and subordinated them to it. For the sake of expediency the explaining away of principles and even their sacrifice was permissible."[1] The two men also disagreed as to their respective powers and duties. Ziauddin Ahmad felt that as he was "the principal academic officer" all academic matters came within his special domain and the Vice-Chancellor was trespassing on his jurisdiction. Aftab Ahmad Khan maintained that he was charged with the duty of enforcing the Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations and had, therefore, the right to look into the academic administration of the University.

The term of officc of Aftab Ahmad Khan came to an end in December, 1926, and Nawab Sir Mohammad Muzzammilullah Khan was elected Vice-Chancellor in his place. Before relinquishing charge of his office, however, the former published (on 28 December) a pamphlet explaining the difficulties he had experienced as Vice-Chancellor and pointing out certain irregularities and shortcomings in the administration of the University. Copies of the pamphlet were sent to the members of the Court as well as to

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1 Zuberi, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

the Central and Provincial Governments. The Governor-General of India, in his capacity as Lord Rector of the University, took serious note of the complaints contained in the pamphlet and strongly advised the Chancellor (Begum of Bhopal) to set up an Enquiry Committee to examine the working of the University. The appointment of a Committee by the Chancellor, consisting of Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola as Chairman, and Sir Phillip Hartog, Member, Public Service Commission, and Sir John Anderson, Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, as members, was notified by the Registrar in September, 1927. Professor A. M. F. Rahman of Dacca University, an Aligarh Old Boy, was appointed as Sccretary.

The Enquiry Committee commenced its work in October. Sixty-one memoranda were submitted to the Committee and thirty-four persons appeared before it to give oral testimony. On 9 November it submitted its report to the Chancellor.

Without examining the report in detail it may be mentioned that the Committee has levelled its criticism at the existence of parties and factions in the Court and the Executive Council of the University and the rapid increase in the number of students which, in its view, was likely to jeopardise the special traditions of Aligarh. It has pointed out that the Rules and Regulations had not been strictly observed; that the Admission Committee, which was responsible for giving admissions to the University, had not functioned regularly ; that a number of appointments to the teaching staff had been made without reference to

a Selection Committee. The report admits that the standard of examinations was satisfactory and that care had been taken by the University, in keeping with the Regulations, to appoint a fair percentage of examiners from outside.

While expressing its appreciation of Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad's love for Aligarh and the services rendered by him to the M.A.O. College and the University, the Committee recommended that he should sever his connection with the University. On 15 April, 1928, the Court adopted the report "in toto" and resolved that all its recommendations should be implemented. Before the Court met Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad had submitted his resignation from the post of Pro-Vice-Chancellor, which was accepted by the Executive Council on 30 March, 1928, with effect from 27 April, and Professor M. M. Sharif, Head of the Department of Philosophy had been appointed officiating Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

On 9 and 10 February, 1929, the Court met again. The agenda for the meeting included, along with other items, consideration of the resignation of Sir Mohammad Muzzamilullah Khan from the post of Vice-Chancellor and the election of his successor. After accepting the resignation of Muzzamilullah Khan the Court elected as Vice-Chancellor Syed Ross Masood, grandson of Syed Ahmad Khan, who had already rendered distinguished service in the field of education in the State of Hyderabad. At the time of his election Syed Ross Masood was undergoing medical treatment in Germany and on account of protracted illness he could not join his duties till October. In July A. E.

Horne, I. E. S., Principal, Patna College, had been appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor and had taken over from M. M. Sharif. In June, 1930, Horne died and R. B. Ramsbotham, who was serving as a member of the Indian Education Service in Bengal, was appointed as his successor (February, 1931).

Syed Ross Masood took up the work of Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University at a critical juncture in its history. Without going into the merits and demerits of the report of the Enquiry Committee and examining the question of its impartiality or otherwise, it can be affirmed that the publication of the report had damaged the reputation of the University and lowered its prestige in the eyes of the Muslim community—a serious thing for an institution depending on public support.

Syed Ross Masood was able to restore the prestige of the University in a short time. He was gifted with vision and proved himself a firm and tactful administrator. Moreover, his name inspired confidence in the mind of the public, which was glad to see him occupying his grandfather's chair. He had also a talent for raising funds and was able to secure special grants of Rs. 15 lakhs and Rs. 10 lakhs from the Government of India and the State of Hyderabad respectively as well as substantial donations from the Rulers of Bhopal, Bahawalpur, Junagadh and other dignitaries. The annual grants by the Government of India, the Government of the United Provinces and several States were also enhanced.

During the regime of Ross Masood a great deal

of emphasis was placed on furtherance of research and on the development of scientific studies. The special grant by the Central Government, referred to above, was utilised for the purpose of constructing well-designed laboratories for Zoology, Botany, and Chemistry and equipping them with the lastest apparatus. A new building constructed in the preceding regime for the School was used, after necessary structural changes, to house the Department of Physics, which was also furnished with up-to-date equipment. These laboratories were reckoned amongst the best in the sub-continent.

The premises occupied by the University library were enlarged and a substantial addition was made to its collection of books. Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan presented to the library the entire collection of books of his grandfather, Nawab Mustafa Khan Sheftah, which included many rare books and manuscripts. The very valuable library of Nawab 'Abd al-Salam Khan of Rampur was also loaned to the University.

In 1932, the Intermediate College was abolished in accordance with the recommendation of the Rahimtoola Committee. The 9th and 10th classes were amalgamated with the University School and the 1st and 2nd year classes with the University. The Intermediate College hostels were constituted into a Hall which was named after Nawab Vaqar-ul-Mulk, one of the Secretaries of the M.A.O. College. Sir Syed Hall and Mohsin-ul-Mulk Hall had already been constituted in the preceding regime.

The Old Boys' Association built a hostel, consisting of single-seated rooms, to commemorate the services of Aftab Ahmad Khan and named it after him. They also decided to run it as a 'cheap hostel' and charge the minimum possible fees for board and lodging from the students;[1] by a special dispensation from the Executive Council they were allowed to set up their own Hall Council. In the course of 1933 and 1934 the Morison Court, the McDonald House and the Mumtaz-Latouche Hostel were amalgamated with the Aftab Hall. Thus the Mohsin-ul-Mulk Hall automaticaly disappeared.

An extensive building programme was undertaken by Ross Masood. Besides the science laboratories, already referred to, construction of a new building for the Training College, conversion of the eastern portion of Syed Mahmud Court (*Katchī Baarak*) into a pucca structure and the construction of a gymnasium need special mention.

A large part of the University is situated on low-lying land. During the rainy season stagnant water used to collect in puddles, which became the breeding ground of mosquitoes. Attempts made from time to time to commence the session in July always failed as the tempo of work was considerably reduced on account of the prevalence of malaria. On such occasions the accommodation for indoor patients in the University hospital proved inadequate

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1 In the Aftab Hall, Rs. 6 per mensem were charged from a student for board—*i. e.*, lunch and dinner. He had to make his own arrangements for breakfast and tea.

and tents had to be pitched in the hospital grounds. This necessitated keeping the University open during the hot summer months, closing it during the rainy season and starting the new session in October—after the admissions to most other Universities had closed. Many parents, on account of their devotion to Aligarh, kept their sons waiting for the opening of the University, and in their case refusal of admission on the ground of lack of space meant the loss of an academic year. Ross Masood had a drain constructed for carrying away storm-water from the University area. This reduced greatly the incidence of malaria and enabled the authorities to close the University during summer for the long vacation and open it in July.

At the annual meeting of the Court held in April, 1944, Ross Masood moved that the period of appointment of the Registrar, Fakhruddin Ahmad, whose services had been borrowed from government, be extended by five years, but the Court turned down his proposal. He treated the decision of the Court as a vote of no-confidence and resigned. A number of members of the Court tried to persuade him to withdraw his resignation, but he remained adamant. The vacuum created by his resignation was filled in by the election of Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, Treasurer of the University, as officiating Vice-Chancellor.

In November, a special meeting of the Court was called to elect a permanent Vice-Chancellor. Two names were proposed, namely, those of Nawab

Mohammad Ismail Khan and Nawab Sir Ahmad Said Khan of Chattari. A show-down was, however, avoided by postponing the election till the annual meeting of the Court. In February, 1935, Ramsbothem's term as Pro-Vice-Chancellor came to an end, and the present writer was appointed in his place.

Some persons occupying high positions in the government were feeling concerned and perturbed at the prospect of Ismail Khan, who had the reputation of being an 'extremist' in politics, getting elected as Vice-Chancellor. They looked round for a winning candidate and ultimately their choice fell on Ziauddin Ahmad. The annual meeting of the Court was held on 19 April, 1935, and the supporters of both the candidates mustered strong. Government influence was thrown heavily into the scale in favour of Ziauddin Ahmad, who won by a substantial majority.[1&2] As a result of these developments Nawab Sir Hamidullah Khan of Bhopal, an eminent Aligarian, who had succeded his mother as Chancellor of the University, resigned and all attempts to persuade him to withdraw his resignation failed. Even after his resignation, however, he continued to take a keen interest in the welfare of the University. In August,

1 A number of members of the Court were flown in the Viceroy's special plane from Hyderabad (Deccan) to Delhi to enable them to reach Aligarh in time for the meeting.

2 It is interesting to note that Sir George Anderson, who as a member of the Rahimtoola Committee had recommended that Ziauddin Ahmad should sever his association with the University, was Educational Commissioner to the Government of India at this time and was instrumental in implementing the policy of the Government.

at a special meeting of the Court, His Exalted Highness Mir Sir Osman Ali Khan, Nizam of Hyderabad, was elected Chancellor. By his munificence he had furthered the cause of education within as well as outside his dominions and had earned a well-deserved reputation as patron of learning. His election was welcomed throughout the sub-continent.

Muslim students as a rule found it difficult to secure admission to the various Engineering Colleges in the sub-continent and the need for an Engineering College at Aligarh was being keenly felt. This need had been emphasised from time to time by Muslim leaders and voiced more than once from the platform of the All-India Muslim Educational Conference. The funds collected at the time of the Jubilee had also been earmarked for this purpose. In 1936, a small beginning was made by the establishment of an Institute of Technology.

The old cricket pavilion, which was in a dilapidated condition, was pulled down and a new one was built. The gymnasium, which had been built in the days of Ross Masood, was not being used on account of certain structural defects. After making necessary changes it was properly equipped and thrown open to the students. It was a valuable addition to the athletic facilities provided by the University and its proximity to the swimming pool made it doubly attractive.

In 1938 the term of Ziauddin Ahmad as Vice-Chancellor came to an end and at the annual meeting of the Court due to be held in April a contest between

him and Ismail Khan was expected. Some influential members of the Court, however, intervened, and on their persuasion both of them withdrew and Sir Shah Mohammad Sulaiman was elected unopposed. Sir Shah was an absentee Vice-Chancellor. Being a Judge of the Federal Court he could come to Aligarh only for the week-ends and that also not very regularly. This naturally entailed a very heavy responsibility on the Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

At the same meeting of the Court the resignation of His Royal Highness the late Aga Khan from the office of Pro-Chancellor was accepted and His Highness Nawab Sir Sayed Mohammad Raza Ali Khan, Ruler of Rampur, was elected to succeed him. The Aga Khan had played a very important and vital role in bringing the University into being, but he was keen on retirement and suggested that one of the younger ruling princes should take his place. The election of the Ruler of Rampur proved a happy one. His Highness showed constant solicitude for the progress of the University and paid frequent visits to Aligarh.

Prior to the foundation of the University a Muslim Girls School had been established at Aligarh through the efforts of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, an enthusiastic worker in the field of women's education. In the Academic Ordinances of the University special provision was made for the admission of women as private candidates to University examinations if they could satisfy the Academic Council that they had undergone a suitable course of instruction,

and a Board of Women's Education was set up "for the better carrying out" of this provision. In 1924, the Muslim Girls' School had been raised to the status of an Intermediate College. In 1937, the B. A. class was started and the College produced its first crop of Arts graduates in 1939.

In 1939, women were admitted to the Training College as well as the post-graduate classes in some of the Arts Departments. As most of them came from conservative families purdah arrangements were made in the class rooms and separate seminar rooms were provided for them. Black burqah was prescribed as the uniform for women students. The question of starting co-education in the University without any purdah restrictions was discussed in the Court, which had the final say in all matters of higher policy, but the majority of that body felt that whereas women belonging to "progressive families" could adjust themselves to purdah arrangements without any hardship, the absence of such arrangements would deprive those belonging to "conservative families" of the benefits of higher education.

In the same year, compulsory military drill for all the students of the University was introduced. There was at Aligarh a very efficient unit of the University Training Corps (later called the University Officers' Training Corps) but its number was strictly limited by the Government and the general body of students did not derive any benefit from it. It was felt that the introduction of military drill in the first period would not only improve the health of the students

but would also help in building up that *esprit de corps* and sense of discipline for which Aligarh was already noted.

The Second World War broke out in 1939. The authorities of the University felt that this was not merely a struggle between two warring camps, but that certain moral values were involved. They, therefore, decided to co-operate with the government in its war efforts in so far as such co-operation came within the legitimate sphere of the University. Those students who wanted to take up emergency commissions were permitted to do so and special regulations were framed to enable them to resume their studies on the termination of military service. No 'war degrees' were awarded. A scheme for the creation of an Air Training Corps was worked out in consultation with representatives of the Air Headquarters and introduced. This scheme was subsequently discussed and approved by the Inter-University Board of India and adopted by other Universities.

In 1940, the Institute of Technology was transferred from Sarfraz House to a new and commodious building, which had been constructed in the days of Ross Masood as a co-operative market, and was raised to the status of a full-fledged Engineering College, training students for degrees and diplomas in civil, mechanical and electrical engineering. On account of the war certain difficulties were experienced in procuring equipment and apparatus, but through perseverance those difficulties were overcome. The College rendered yeoman service in its special field

and produced a large number of qualified and efficient engineers.

The northern wing of the Duty Hostel was built and on account of its proximity to the Science Laboratories, was reserved for science students. Apart from meeting, though inadequately, the increasing demand for residential accommodation it enhanced the amount at the disposal of the Duty Society for helping deserving students.

In 1940, Shah Mohammad Sulaiman died. His demise was followed by a fresh contest for the office of Vice-Chancellor.[1] This time the contestants were Sir Shaikh Abdul Qadir and Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad. Supporters of both the candidates gathered in force for the annual meeting of the Court scheduled for April, 1941. Brisk canvassing went on and the members of the Court coming from outside Aligarh were lavishly entertained in the rival camps. Traditional Muslim hospitality degenerated into an electioneering device, and pamphlets enumerating the services and accomplishments of the rival candidates were served with the *biryani*.[2]

When the meeting commenced a member of the Court used an expression of disrespect about the

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1 It may be mentioned that before his death Shah Mohammad Sulaiman had issued a statement to the effect that at the end of his term he would not seek re-election as Vice-Chancellor.

2 Shaikh Abdul Qadir counted Dr. Abdul Haque (Baba-e-Urdu), a member of the Court, amongst his firm supporters, but when they met at Aligarh the latter advised him to withdraw his candidature because "neither Satan nor Archangel Gabriel can win an election against Ziauddin".

Amin, *op. cit.*, p. 159 footnote.

Nizam of Hyderabad, who was the Chancellor. This caused an uproar and a walk out by a substantial section of the house. Attempts made by mediators to bring about a reconciliation failed and the protesting group decided to boycott the proceedings, even though the offending member had been made to apologise and to withdraw from the meeting. In the absence of the dissidents the rest of the members, who actually formed a majority, decided to proceed with the agenda and elected Ziaudnin Ahmad as Vice-Chancellor.

Since its inception the Tibbia College had been functioning in makeshift buildings which were proving inadequate for its growing needs. In the late thirties and the early forties a hospital and an academic block, specially designed to meet its requirements, were built and the college thus acquired a suitable and permanent habitat.

The entry of Japan into the war and the invasion of Burma in December, 1941, brought the flames of war close to the frontiers of the sub-continent and the Government of India naturally intensified its preparations to ward off the danger. In order to encourage the war efforts of the University it sanctioned money for the construction of two large workshops. They proved a valuable asset for giving practical training to the students of the Engineering College. They were also used for training war technicians for the government. The Science Departments of the University carried on researches on problems arising out of the war which were referred to them from time to time.

At the time of framing the constitution of the University the question of grouping the Departments of Studies into Faculties was considered, but ultimately the proposal was dropped. The question was raised again in 1942-4, but views on his Issue amongst responsible person in the University were divided. Some maintained that as the Universitv had expanded decentralisation had become necessary, and this could not be brought about without introduction of Faculties. Others felt that the existing system under which the recommendations of each Department were placed directly before the Academic Council and the Head of each Department discussed his problems directly with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor was working quite well and no fundamental change was called for. Ultimately the Academic Council resolved by a majority to introduce the Faculty system. This decision led to certain changes in the constitution of the University, including abolition of the post of Pro-Vice-Chancellor and transfer of all his important powers to the Vice-Chancellor. These changes became effective early in 1944. In April, Ziauddin Ahmad was elected Vice-Chancellor for the third time.

It was becoming more and more difficult for the University with its limited resources to cope with the ever increasing number of students. The construction of the eastern wing of the Duty Hostel provided a partial solution to this problem.

It was difficnlt for Muslim students to secure admission to medical colleges. There was an overall

paucity of medical personnel in the sub-continent, but this paucity was greater in the Muslim community than in the other communities, such as the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Parsees. The Muslims were becoming more and more alive to the importance of medical education and the University authorities could not remain impervious to this imperative need. A scheme for a Medical College was prepared with the help of experts and a regular campaign for funds was started. Deputations consisting of teachers and students toured the country, while the Vice-Chancellor himself visited the bigger and wealthier cities like Calcutta and Bombay. The Muslim public responded generously to the appeal for funds, and by the end of 1946 approximately forty-four lakhs of rupees had been collected, including a donation of Rs. 10 lakhs by the Nizam.[1] The chief credit for the success of the campaign goes to Ziauddin Ahmed, who worked with zeal and devotion to further the project of the Medical College, and next to him to Sayed Hadi Hassan, Professor of Persian, who displayed unusual skill and indefatigable energy in raising donations. A certain amount of costly apparatus was also purchased at a very moderate price from the American Army Hospitals at the conclusion of the war.

References have already been made to the cooperation extended by the University to the Govern-

1 The report of the Vice-Chancellor for the calender year 1946 (read at the Convocation held on 16 February, 1947) gives the total amount collected till the end of 1946 as Rs. 43,79,217/2/- (see page 17 of the report). This excludes promises.

ment of India in the prosecution of the war. In all "the University supplied during the war 1,100 cadets for emergency commissions in the land, air and naval forces and 200 qualified engineers for the military engineering services", besides training 1,500 war technicians.[1] In fact, the contribution of Aligarh to the war effort was greater and more significant than that of any other University in thc sub-continent with the exception of the University of the Punjab. It must, however, be mentioned that the latter was a much bigger University and its jurisdiction covered the entire undivided Punjab along with the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan.

In April, 1947, Ziauddin Ahmad's third term as Vice-Chancellor came to an end and Zahid Husain was elected by the Court to succeed him. The latter held the office till Partition when he was appointed Pakistan's first High Commissioner in New Delhi.

It has already been mentioned that on account of abnormal circumstances the University started functioning with a very small number of students. As the controversial events of 1920, however, receded into the background, the number of scholars began to increase and by the academic year 1926-27 it had gone up to 1,174 in the University and 1,087 in the Intermediate College[2]. After the adoption of the report of the Rahimtoola Committee by the Court a

1 Address presented to H. R. H. the Aga Khan on the occasion of his Diamond Jubilee by the members of the Court at Bombay on 9 March, 1946. (See p. 6 of the address).

2 It must be noted that the Intermediate College included the 9th and 10th classes which had been transferred from the University School.

policy of keeping down the number of students was followed and the enrolment in the University during the year 1929-30 had gone down to 885. During the session of 1932-33 the total strength of students in the University was 1,087 but this figure includes 480 young men admitted to the Intermediate Arts and Science classes.[1]

From 1935 onwards the earlier policy of admitting as large a number of students as circumstances permitted was reverted to and the admissions showed an upward trend for the next ten years. During the year 1938-39 the number went up to 1,842 and by the year 1945-46 it had increased to 4,154 [2] and [3].

As the above figures indicate, from the point of view of numbers Aligarh was not reckoned amongst the bigger universities of the sub-continent, but its importance in the life of India in general and the life of the Muslim community in particular was much greater than the number of scholars on its rolls warranted.

The Muslim University, like the M.A.O. College, was in the true sense of the term a residential institu-

1 After the abolition of the Intermediate College in 1932, the 9th and 10th classes were transferred back to the school.

2 The number of scholars in the allied institutions during 1945-46 is given below:

Women's College: 245.
Tibbia College : 64.
Muslim University High School : 670.
Muslim University City High School : 710.

Total ... 1689

3 All the figures given above are taken from the annual reports presented at the convocation. These reports were presented by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor till the end of 1943 and subsequently by the Vice-Chancellor.

tion. The bulk of the students lived in the hostels and the number of day scholars was rigorously kept down. Each hostel was under a Warden and each Hall, comprising a group of hostels, under a Provost.[1] Attendance in the dining hall at lunch and dinner was obligatory. The Wardens and Provosts as a rule mixed freely with the students and occasionally lunched or dined with them in the dining hall. There was no 'high table'. In fact, close intercourse between the teachers and the taught, in and outside the hostels, was the essence of Aligarh life.

There is a fairly widespread impression that the great bulk of the students at Aligarh came from well-to-do families. This impression is erroneous. A very considerable proportion of them belonged to poor families and needed financial support. In order to help them to overcome their pecuniary difficulties various means were adopted. Besides free studentships (exemption from tuition fees) and half-free-studentships (reduction in tuition fees) concessions in hostel charges were given to a number of students. The Duty Society helped many promising and deserving young men year after year. It sent out during the long vacation deputations to different parts of the country, consisting mostly of students and led either by a senior student or by a member of the teaching staff. These deputations served a two-fold purpose. Their primary object was to collect funds for the Society, but they also enabled the deputationists

1 The day scholars were also placed under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff called the Warden of day scholars.

to explain in the course of personal conversation or at public meetings the aims and ideals for which Aligarh stood. Moreover, in course of time, construction of different wings of the Duty Hostel provided the Society with a steady and reliable income.

Other sources of help were available to students in the form of the Vice-Chancellor's Fund, created by Ross Masood, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor's Fund, created by the present writer. Through the munificence of the Aga Khan a Fund for Foreign Studies was established, which was named after the donor. This fund was utilised for sending some of the brightest products of the University for higher studies abroad. These men on their return proved an asset to the teaching staff of the institution.

Aligarh was noted for its emphasis on games and sports. The games club kept up a high standard of efficiency and produced a succession of teams which won laurels in matches and tournaments. The University also maintained a unit of the U. O. T. C., which enjoyed an excellent reputation, and a Riding School with its picturesque green uniform.

Aligarh had a distinctive uniform consisting of a black sherwani or Aligarh coat, fez and white trousers.[1] This uniform had to be worn in the class rooms, the dining hall, the Union, when calling on a University officer or visiting the city or the railway station. Strict enforcement of the uniform removed

1 In summer it was permissible to wear a *Sherwani* or Aligarh coat of white or light brown colour. Sikh students were allowed to wear a turban instead of a fez.

the outward distinction between the rich and the poor, which is often produced by expensive attire, and greatly facilitated the task of the Proctorial Department in maintaining discipline, specially in the city.

The proctorial system was run very efficiently. In carrying on their duties the Proctor and Pro-Proctors were ably assisted by a body of students carefully picked from the different Halls of Residence. Students were also mainly responsible, under the supervision of a Warden, for the management of the dining halls. All functions in honour of visiting dignitaries, including the highest in the land, were managed by students. They even looked after those arrangements which are normally entrusted to the police ; in fact, no policeman in uniform ever entered the precincts of the University. The students also enjoyed complete academic freedom and were at liberty to discuss in the Union as well as the literary and scientific societies any subject under the sun.

The whole scheme of life at Aligarh was calculated to inculcate in those who entered its portals qualities of courage, initiative, self-confidence and self-reliance as well as to develop their administrative capacity. No wonder the Muslim University, like the M. A. O. College, produced a large galaxy of eminent men—men who distinguished themselves in law, politics, the civil services, the army and other walks of life.

The doors of the University were open to persons of all denominations. There was a very fair proportion of Hindu students, and a sprinkling of Christians

and Sikhs. One of the best hostels in the University was reserved for the Hindu students to enable them to make arrangements for their meals in keeping with orthodox Hindu practice. Those Hindus who were not particular about observance of caste restrictions were welcome to live with their Muslim fellow-students. In the annual elections to the Students' Union it was customary to elect a Hindu as a member of the Cabinet.

The Muslim University, as its name implies, was intended primarily for Muslims and the bulk of the students were drawn from Muslim families. They came from all the provinces of the sub-continent, including remote corners of Assam, Malabar and the North-West Frontier. Some foreign students were also attracted by the reputation of Aligarh, and young men came not merely from neighbouring countries like Iran and Afghanistan but even from distant places like Malaya, Sumatra, Java, East Africa and South Africa.

Persons coming from different regions and belonging to diffeıent sects lived together not merely in the same hostels but very often in the same rooms and thus learnt to know and understand one another better. Their provincial angularities and sectarian prejudices were rubbed off and through close personal contact they developed a strong and intimate feeling of belonging to a common fraternity. Moreover, by living in an Islamic centre of learning where, in keeping with the injunctions of Islam, tolerance and respect for other creeds were matters of daily practice,

they developed a broad and liberal outlook together with pride in their own socio-cultural heritage.

The authorities of the University were in the habit of exhorting the students to abstain from active participation in politics and with the exception of some rare occasions they were by no means unsuccessful.[1] It was, however, neither possible nor desirable to prevent the students from taking a keen interest in the political affairs of the sub-continent. Political subjects were freely discussed in the Union and leading politicians belonging to different schools of thought were invited to take part in the debates. As Aligarh enjoyed a unique position in the life of the Muslim community, the views which were accepted and the trends which manifested themselves in the University had a tendency to spread throughout the land.

After launching the campaign for the attainment of a national homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah paid frequent visits to Aligarh to propound his views, and his utterances evoked a warm and enthusiastic response from the students. The importance which he attached to Aligarh can be gauged from the following observations which he made publicly more than once :—

"Aligarh is the armoury of Muslim India."

1 One of those rare occasions was provided by the general elections of *1945-46* when the Muslim League made the attainment of Pakistan the main plank in its political platform. The issue was of such vital importance to the Muslims that many students as well as teachers were drawn into the vortex of politics.

"What Aligarh says today Muslim India says tomorrow."

"Often in civilised history", says the Aga Khan, "a University has supplied the spring-board for a nation's intellectual and spiritual renaissance. In our time it has been said that the American Robert Missionary College in Constantinople led to the re-emergence of Bulgaria as an independent, sovereign nation. . . . . Aligarh is no exception to this rule. But we may claim with pride that Aligarh was the product of our own efforts and of no outside benevolence; and surely it may also be claimed that the independent, sovereign nation of Pakistan was born in the Muslim University of Aligarh."[1]

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1 *The Memoirs of Aga Khan*, Cassell & Company Ltd., London, 1954, pages 35 and 36.

CHAPTER IX

DACCA UNIVERSITY—ITS ROLE IN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

The University of Dacca is one of the two oldest centres of higher learning and research in Pakistan. The story of its establishment and development is a rare saga of how Muslim aspirations in East Pakistan did chart their course to fulfilment through a sustained struggle against two formidable forces—the British Raj that tended to favour unduly the Hindu community in order to relegate to the background the Muslims, the erstwhile conquerors and rulers of India, and the Hindus who through their innate jealousy and hatred grew apprehensive visualising a considerable attenuation of their privileges in the event of the depressed Muslims coming back once again into prominence in the subcontinent. As against such odds, the eventual establishment of the University obviously marked no mean a triumph of the Muslim cause in this part of the country.

The establishment and subsequent blossoming of the University of Dacca were greatly facilitated by the partition of Bengal on two occasions, once proclaimed in July 1905 and again in August 1947, consequent on the creation of Pakistan. The Partitions of Bengal, the first having been annulled prematurely and unjustifiably by a wavering British Government under duress of Hindu militancy, were two of the most significant milestones on the long and tortuous course of the Muslim

struggle for national existence and its fulfilment in the eastern province of pre-Independence Bengal in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent.

Despite the age-old co-existence, the Hindus and the Muslims had always lived as two distinct peoples and their cultures and faiths, political and economic interests did never merge so as to form a single history and tradition for them. Their ways and aspirations were not only far-flung, they were diametrically opposed. The chasm remained as deep as wide. It is only through a very native assessment that such vital differences between the Hindus and the Muslims can be dismissed as offshoots of parochialism and figments of imaginations. For sometime or at times, circumstances might prove to have propitiously forestalled or even wiped away the fissiparious tendencies, but the genesis of bifurcation had always been potently there, right from the inception of the British rule. The Muslim consciousness of being a separate though backward community emerged as early as the beginning of the 19th century. The history of the Indian Muslims of the first half of the 19th century is the history of a community aware of its former greatness and gradual decay, fighting desparately an unequal battle against the very unfavourable circumstances that followed in the wake of a changed political situation in the country. During the second half of the 19th century, the Muslims grew conscious of themselves and of the vital need of carving themselves distinctly out with their own culture, faith and aspiration.

With the dawn of the 20th century the hitherto suppressed Muslims of India emerged as a solid body to face squarely the grim realities before them in a desperate bid to mould and reorient their future on surer lines. The long strides they made could well measure the success they achieved in a fast changing and progressive world. The sister community of the Hindus noted with chagrin this trend and grew seriously apprehensive of an inevitable disruption in the monopoly it steadily enjoyed of the favours thrown in its way by the British rulers. The better educated Hindus, eternally hostile to the Muslims, politically intelligent and alert to future possibilities, economically well-entrenched, commanding the vocal organs of public opinion like the great Bengali and English language newspapers of India, prepared to organise and fight for the preservation of their dominant position in all spheres of life. The sustained patronage given them by the Britishers had since the debacle of the last Muslim Nawab of Bengal on the historic field of Plassey in 1757 engendered in them overweening confidence and vaulting ambitions. And yet the determined Muslims of Bengal could prove equal to this formidable challenge.

It was what would have been termed to-day a 'cold war' that was raging in Bengal. The British rulers felt ill at ease, for they could well read portents of disaster in such estrangement between the two major communities. In the opening years of the 20th century, Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy of India impelled more by political expediency and adminis-

trative exigencies than by any love for the Muslims gave out his plan to establish a University at Dacca. And thus came into being a University destined to play a vital role in the Muslim struggle for Independence that culminated in 1947 in the creation of Pakistan.

The creation of the University of Dacca was largely the result of the desire of the Muslims of Eastern Bengal "to stimulate the educational progress of their community"[1] and due to their demand for greater facilities of higher education. The Muslims in Bengal were backward in the field of English education even in the beginning of the present century. For the most part they stood aside from the English education. In 1912, when the idea for founding a University at Dacca was first seriously expressed, there were not more than eighty Muslim students in the Colleges of Dacca. The number of Muslim students in the Presidency College Calcutta was negligible. Long accustomed to regard themselves as the ruling race, the Muslims retained their devotion to the traditional Islamic studies in Arabic and Persian, which they had hitherto found not merely culturally valuable, but also practically useful. But towards the end of the 19th century they had been reduced to an extreme state of degradation and misery. The introduction of English as the official language reduced the economic value of Persian and a large number of Muslims, who were well educated but ignorant of English, were reduced to the level of

1 *Report of the Calcutta University Commission*, 1917-19. Part II, Vol. IV, p. 121.

semi-literates by this one measure. The Muslims were, however, being drawn to the new education, whether they liked it or not, but the British had little desire to help them. Economic urge was also missing for the Muslims because there was discrimination against them in Government service. Positive steps were also taken to destroy their educational system. With the rapid deterioration in the economic position of the Muslims it was increasingly difficult for them to maintain their educational institutions. The establishment of new ones was well nigh impossible.

The result was that there was inequality in the progress in education made by the Hindus and Muslims. The comparatively slow advance made by the Muslims, more specially in the higher branches of education, had prevented them from taking as full a part in the political, professional and industrial life of the province as the Hindus did, and many of the administrative difficulties in Bengal were due to the educational inequality between the Hindus and the Muslims. Comparatively few Muslims were engaged in professional pursuits. They were largely outnumbered by the Hindus in industries and commerce. Their disabilities were largely due to their having failed to keep pace with the Hindus in the matter of education. The development of the province, in political as well as in other directions, was dependent on the uniform educational progress of the two main constituents of the population and on their equal capacity to take advantage both of the opportunities now open to them and of the further opportunities which might be available afterwards.

Muslims constituted more than half of the total population of Bengal and until they were educated sufficiently to be able to take an interest and active part in the public affairs it was difficult to conceive of any improvement in their economic and political life. Indeed it seemed that the only possible way in which they could be made to realise their privileges and responsibilities was by giving them every facility for English education. The leaders of the Muslim community, men like the late Nawab Khawaja Salimullah and Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhury, realised that unless there was rapid development of education, the Muslim community would remain backward and weak and would continue to be exploited by the more advanced communities.

During this period the Muslims throughout the length and breadth of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent had been deeply stirred. Ameer Ali published an article in the *Nineteenth Century* in which he expressed the conviction that "unless effective measures of reform are adopted, and that without delay, the unsatisfactory condition of the Muhammadans threatens to become a source of anxiety and danger to British administration in India."[1] About this time Sir Syed Ahmed Khan entered the list against the general opinion of Muslims. By popular lectures and in the columns of his two journals he fought the view which advocated an almost exclusive devotion on the part of the Muslims to an oriental education of traditional type. He founded several associations and ultimately organised the All India Muhammadan Educational

1 *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1882.

Conference. His greatest achievement was the establishment of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh. But he was not alone in his work. Among the causes contributory to the improvements which were then taking place in the education of Muslims "a high place must be assigned to the propaganda carried on by public spirited leaders such as the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and to the Muhammadan Educational Conferences annually organised by them."[1]

All these had not been without effects. Now the Muslims had increasingly demanded a fuller share of the new learning. The partition of Bengal and the creation of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam in 1905 gave a spur to the dormant hopes of progress of the Muslims and enlightened the path of political advancement. It seemed as if the British Government had all of a sudden become aware of their mistakes of utter neglect of this region and the Muslim community and now they had decided to make amends. The Muslims were found to be in the majority in this new province and the few years' existence of this predominently Muslim province could give the majority population little noticeable benefit in education and other spheres.

The partition of Bengal in 1905, however, affected the vested interests of the educated middle class, composed almost entirely of the Hindus, who had monopolised the services, the trade and other professions in the whole of this Presidency, and

1 *Fifth Quinquennial Review of Education in India*, 1902-1907.

deprived them of the opportunities which they had so long enjoyed. Hence the Hindus rejected the partition outright, as it threw a challenge to their political aspirations, and organised their rank and file to oppose it and to bring about its annulment.

On 12 December, 1911, at the Delhi Darbar His Majesty George V announced the Annulment of the Partition of Bengal inspite of the repeated assurances and utterrances of the British Government. The announcement and subsequent annulment of the Partition of Bengal on 1 April, 1912 caused a stir among the Muslim populace but they had not yet prepared themselves to fight for their cause. This also made the Muslims of the short-lived province seriously concerned for their cultural and material future. The leaders were actively thinking of finding out some effective approach to the British authorities, whose vagaries of decisions in relation to the fate of the Muslims of the subcontinent had already created a state of despair and discontentment among the Muslims. The leaders were anxious to prevent any disastrous drift and were eagerly awaiting to seize the earliest opportunity to turn the tide.

The Muslims were convinced that the state of affairs in the University of Calcutta was unfavourable to their interests and that there was little chance of a large increase in the number of Muslim students at the University level until the Muslims of Eastern Bengal had a University nearer to their doors, in the guidance of which they could have an effective voice. In this regard the description of the general position of the Muslims by the Committee appointed by the Bengal

ment of a University at Dacca. For a long time afterwards they tauntingly termed this University as "Mecca University." This attitude of opposition was expressed in an unmistakable language by the Hindus of Dacca, who made a representation on behalf of the "people of Dacca." They said, "In our opinion, instead of spending twelve lakhs of rupees in the establishment of a new University, which means a heavy recurring expenditure on account of the costly machinery, this sum may be very properly spent in starting a few useful educational institutions in this town. If the above institutions are granted, Dacca, can well afford to be under the existing Calcutta University for a decade or more."[1] The Hindu view may be summed up in the words of Sris Chandra Chatterjee, "At the outset let me tell you that I am strongly opposed to the idea of a separate University at Dacca or at any other place within the presidency of Bengal, for a separate University would mean the establishment of a separate controlling agency. The creation of a separate controlling agency would lead to very serious political results. It would mean interference with the steady growth of a feeling of nationality, which is essential for the well-being of the people, and which is being developed through education under the same University. As a matter of fact, I would take the same stand with regard to it as I did with regard to the partition of Bengal.'"[2]

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1 *Report of the Calcutta University Commission*, 1917-19, Vol. X, pp. 85-86.

2 *Ibid.*, Vol. IX, p. 56.

On 16 February, 1912, a deputation headed by Dr. (later Sir) Rash Behary Ghose waited on Lord Hardinge and expressed a fear that the creation of Dacca University would be a sort of 'an internal partition' of Bengal. The Viceroy assured the deputationists that the University would not be a Muslim University, it would be a University open to all—a residential, teaching University.

The above facts show convincingly how far the ideas of the more enlightened Hindu elite of Bengal were at variance with the Muslim desire for attempting to improve their own affairs. The Hindus were against the establishment of a University at Dacca professedly on the ground of national unity. Their opposition was not, however, innocent of vested interests; they did not want to see the Muslims progressing in the educational sphere and desired to suppress them culturally. The Hindus did not oppose the foundation of a University at Banares. Their opposition was mainly because the creation of a University at Dacca, although it was not to be a Muslim University, would detract from the importance of Calcutta.

The Muslim views had been clearly brought out in the representation of the Dacca Muslim Deputation; "Eastern Bengal, as is well known, was till the time of Partition a neglected area. Muhammadans were the principal sufferers. This was the case especially as regards their education. It was during the days of partition that serious attempts were made by the Government to devote their exclusive attention to

the needs of Eastern Bengal and its people.........The annulment of the Partition was, therefore, looked on with serious misgivings, specially by the Muslim section. For it was during the partition days that the problem of Muslim education received at the hands of Government that amount of attention which their importance justified. The Mussalmans naturally felt that the annulment would bring back the old state of things and that they would again be relegated to the background.........It is quite clear that, though the Dacca University question is not essentially a Moslem question, it is a subject which is vitally connected with the problem of Moslem education in Eastern Bengal."[1]

It is not wholly correct that the Government decided to establish a University at Dacca to promote the educational progress of the Muslims by providing special facilities for their higher education in response to a deeply felt need of the Muslims of this region. There was also political motive behind it. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq pointed out that Dacca University "was at first meant to be a concession to the Muhammadan sentiment as a set-off against the injustice done to the (Muslim) Community by the annulment of the partition of Bengal."[2] "Quite in keeping with this A.F.M. Abdul Ali said, "If, as is generally believed the idea in giving a pocket edition of a University to Dacca is to reward the Muhammadans of East Bengal for submissively accepting the

1 *Report of the Calcutta University Commission*, 1917-19 Vol. IX, pp. 80-82

2 *Ibid.*, p. 122.

annulment of the partition, the jurisdiction of the Dacca University should be extended as much as possible."[1]

That this University was not established specially to promote the education of the Muslims would be clear from the reply of Lord Hardinge which he gave to the Hindu deputationists led by Dr. Rash Behary Ghose on 16 February, 1912, that from the fact that he announced the intention of the Government in regard to Dacca to a deputation of Muslims it did not follow that the new University would be a Muslim University adding further that it would be a University open to all—a teaching and residential University.

The desire of the Government to relieve congestion of the Calcutta University was a factor of special importance for the creation of the University of Dacca. One of the most remarkable features in the history of Bengal in the beginning of the 20th Century had been the very rapid increase in the number of University students, which had taken place specially since the Universities Act of 1904. The number of candidates who presented themselves for the Intermediate Examination of the Calcutta University in 1904 was 3,832, but the number in 1917 was, 8,080. In 1917-18 the Calcutta University had to deal with 26,000 students scatterred over a large province wherein communications were very difficult. It was responsible also for the educational control of more than eight hundred schools, a function such as no University outside India was called upon to perform.

1 *Report of the Calcutta University Commission*, Vol. IX, p. 8.

By a curious coincidence the number of students of the United Kidgdom then preparing for university degrees was also almost the same. The 26,000 students of the United Kingdom were divided among eighteen Universities whereas the same number of students of Bengal were all brought under the control of a single vast University mechanism. That is, such a huge number of students followed in each subject the same courses of study, read the same text books, and underwent the same examinations. The University of Calcutta was, in respect of the number of its students, the largest University in the world. When the number of students of Berlin approached five figures, it was felt that their numbers were becoming too great to be effectively dealt with by a single organisation, even though they were all gathered in a single city.

The flood of candidates for university training had put so heavy a strain upon the University of Calcutta and its colleges as to lead it almost to a breakdown. It had brought out in high relief every deficiency of the system. Under these conditions it was unreasonable to expect that its governing bodies should be able to deal with their stupendous task in a wholly satisfactory way. And if justice was to be done to a great opportunity, and the eagerness of young Bengalis for academic training was to be made as advantageous to their country as it ought to be, it had become manifest that bold and drastic changes and improvements in the system were necessary.

Yet the Government of the day was anxious to avoid interfering with the vested interests of the

University of Calcutta. The Provincial Government's resolution, which the Nathan Committee had as a term of reference, emphasised the desire of the Government of India that "the University should be of the teaching and residential and not of the federal type," and that "it should bind together the Colleges of the city and should not include any college which is beyond the limits of the town." Hence the desire to cause the minimum interference with the vested interests of the University of Calcutta, which had long been dominated by the Hindus, was unmistakable in lines of this resolution as well as in the Nathan Committee Report.

The Muslims were against the establishment of a purely residential and teaching University. Quite in keeping with the Muslim sentiment, Mr. A.F.M. Abdul Ali says, "A purely residential University may be the correct thing, but it will hardly benefit the Mussalman community of East Bengal. A residential University is a luxury out of the reach of the majority of the members of the proverbially poor community. In my opinion, the Dacca University should be both a residential as well as an affiliating University. All the colleges of East Bengal, nay, even those of Assam may be allowed affiliation to the University."[1] These points have been more clearly brought out in the representation of Dacca Muslim Deputation: "As regards the jurisdiction of the University, public opinion in Eastern Bengal is opposed to the idea of confining the University to Dacca proper. It is held

1 *Report of the Calcutta University Commission*, Vol. IX, p. 8.

that its benefit should be shared by all alike, and not by only those who can afford to proceed to Dacca for study. To aim at an ideal state of perfection for its own sake is to sacrifice the larger interests of the Eastern Province for whose benefit the University was intended."[1]

The Secretary of State for India gave a general assent to the proposal of establishment of the new University at Dacca. In May 1912, the Government of Bengal appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Robert Nathan to draft a scheme. The Nathan Committee submitted an exhaustive report in the autumn of 1913.

The Committee recommended a State University to be maintained by Government and staffed by Government officers. The Director of Public Instruction was to be official visitor with full powers to inspect all colleges and departments. The Committee suggested that seven colleges with a residential accommodation of 2890 students should form the constituent parts of the University. A College was to be the unit of University life. Teaching in post-graduate and technical subjects was to be conducted by the University in one place. But the teaching for B. A. Pass and Honours degrees would be conducted by the colleges with Inter-collegiate arrangements. Intermediate teaching was to be done by the colleges independently. A Department of Islamic Studies under a European Professor was also recommended to provide University instruction for the

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1 *Report of the Calcutta University Commission*, Vol. IX, pp. 80-82.

students drawn from the reformed *madrasahs*, with the object of producing Arabic scholars with a thorough knowlede of English.

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 led to the postponement of the scheme. By 1917, seeing that the scheme of establishment of a University at Dacca was likely to be postponed indefinitely, the enlightened section of the Muslim leadership of Bengal grew apprehensive. The urgency of the matter was raised on 20 March, 1917, as a motion by Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhury of Dhanbari in the Imperial Legislative Council that "This Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council that necessary steps be taken to draft a bill for the establishment and incorporation of a University at Dacca, and introduce it into the Council at an early date.'' After this, in November of that year, the Government of India reiterated their intention of founding a University at Dacca and referred the matter to the already constituted Calcutta University Commission (1917-1919). This Commission went quite thoroughly into the problem. Their report[1] contained recommendations, the main outlines of which were adopted by the Government and embodied in legislation, to the effect that the University should be unitary, teaching and residential, with a territorial jurisdiction over a radius of five miles from its Convocation Hall.

The Act establishing the Dacca University came into force on 1st July, 1921. The University started with three faculties, viz. Faculties of Arts, Science

1 *Report of the Calcutta University Commission*, Vol. IV, Part II, Chapter XXXIII, pp. 121-241.

and Law, comprising 12 separate Departments to which another Department was added in the second academic session. The original intention had been to staff these Departments by recruitment in England. But financial considerations did not allow fufilment of this ambitious project. The two local colleges, Dacca College and Jagannath College, which ceased to exist as first grade Colleges on the establishment of the University provided the initial nuclei of both students and staff for the newly created University.

The Dacca University started with certain features which distinguished it from many other educational intitutions of the subcontinent. The establishment of a strong department of Arabic and Islamic Studies on mordern lines, combining with instruction in those studies a thorough grounding in the English language, formed an essential feature of this University. It is a proof of the wisdom of the leaders of Muslim Bengal that they insisted on a sound educational foundation before entering the whirlpool of politics. Education is the mother of politics and precedes, or should precede, it. An integrated system of education influences social ideas and develops national character. Religion and Education are the two most important parts of the spiritual superstructure which is the essence of nationalism. The University provided from the very beginning facilities for resident scholars to observe religious practices, such as fasting in the month of Ramazan and appointed a Pesh Imam for each of the Muslim Halls to arrange for the calling of the Azan at the appointed hours, to lead the five daily prayers, to conduct the *Tarawih*

during the Ramazan and to perform such other religious duties.

The organisation of the residential system was a distinctive feature of the Dacca University. The students had to be either resident in or attached to a Hall. The University started with three such Halls in July, 1921. The Muslim Hall was regarded from the very beginning as an institution with a potentiality to be of the greatest importance for the future progress of the Muslim community in Bengal, and through the Muslim community for the general progress of the province. Muslim leaders all over the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent were eagerly watching the development of the Muslim Hall. The All India Muslim Educational Conference (Madras Session, 1927) took special note of the progress of this Hall. It has since produced traditions of great value to the present and future generations of students. The residential system, which even now forms an essential feature of the University, brings together young men belonging to different parts of the province, and even many from outside, and affords them opportunities of widening their outlook on life. Here the students are trained in the art of living and working together in various spheres of student activity. It is also here that they acquire and develop the basic qualities of leadership. It is only in the fitness of things that leaders of thought and action in East Pakistan have mainly come from the Dacca University.

The University well known for vigorous corporate activities among students through Hall Unions,

managed by the students themselves, each such Union—the centre of the corporate life of the students—having a Literary Committee, Reading and Common Rooms, a Social Service League, a Dramatic Club, or Athletic Club. It also organised Science Colloquiums and Seminars in different subjects, and held entertainments and meetings and published journals. In short it helped in developing a vigorous corporate and academic life among the students. As distinguished from the Hall Unions the University Students' Union embraced all students of the University, encouraged corporate activities amongst them and brought the Halls closer together as component units of the larger whole of the University. It also brought together almost the entire body of the University staff and students on the common platform of social life through organising debates, lectures and social gatherings.

The University, located in a compact area, offered opportunities of close social contact between teachers and students and of facilities of healthy extra-curricular activities. The advance made in the development of corporate life among the students of the University and the Halls through the self-governing student bodies drew the attention of all educational visitors to the University. The reputation of the Dacca University consisted not only in its educational activities but also in the high standards of its extra-curricular activities. The Dacca students made remarkable progress in games and sports. They came to be known for the excellence of their manners

and behaviour. It was recognised that the possession of fine Halls of residence in open great spaces gave to this University advantages which few other Universities in the subcontinent then enjoyed, and with utilization of these facilities sound corporate life was developed among the students.

The University Officers' Training Corps (U. O. T. C.), first formed in 1928, was expanded from time to time. The Corps furnished Cadets in the Commissioned Ranks of the Pakistan Army, Air Force and Navy. All the young men sent out by the various schools of the Pakistan Army, Air Force and Navy have given a good account of themselves and some of them have distinguished themselves in Pakistan Military Academy. The activities of the Corps give a direct lie to the popular belief that East Pakistanis are not "military-minded."

The University proved equally successful in its endeavour to realise another most important purpose for which it was brought into being, that is, the need for creating in the then Province of Bengal a new type of unitary, teaching and residential University. The value of methods of teaching and the standard of examinations of the University were recognised throughout the subcontinent and abroad. The chief feature was concerned with the tutorial supervision. Each student was assigned specially to one of the teachers for general guidance and thus the pass degree tutorial supervison was done. Honour students were in addition under the direct tutorial supervision of the head of the department. The plan for such

supervisory guidance was designed to be something different from the system of intensified coaching for examination which was long known by the term "tutorial work." The University authorities regarded the object of the tutorial class to be such as "to encourage originality and individual effort to ensure that each individual student shall be enabled to learn something of intellectual production as well as of reproduction, so that when he enters the world he will not find himself for the first time confronted with intellectual problems to which he has not been taught the answer beforehand." Further, "its record of original work by the member of the staff and research of students compared favourably with that of any other Indian University."

The Dacaa University occupied a very important place in the political, social and economic life of Muslim Bengal. Before Independence it was the centre of learning for the Muslims of Bengal and even after Partition it was the only such centre until the establishment of the Rajshahi University. The leaders in various fields of activity in East Pakistan, which constitutes more than half of the total population of Pakistan, were mostly alumni of the Dacca University. The Dacca University as much as the Aligarh Muslim University belongs to history for all its contributions to the Muslim cause of freedom.

One of the functions of a modern University is to raise the level of participation of the educated people in the creation and growth of national consciousness. It aims at promoting the development of knowledge

within its own national culture-society. These are the 'nationalistic' functions of a University, and historically they are exemplified by French and German Universities at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the Hind-Pakistan subcontinent they are exemplified by the creation and functions of the Muslim University at Aligarh and the Dacca University in East Pakistan.

The role of what we may call 'education nationalism' in Muslim India can best be studied in the history of Aligarh Muslim University and that of the Dacca University. "Aligarh was the symbol of Muslim nationalism in the fields of education and learning; but it was not the only symbol, though it was the most important." The contribution of the Dacca University to Muslim awakening was also great, in fact in respect of Muslims of Bengal it was the most important.

The impact of the Dacca University was revolutionary. The Muslim students developed a confidence in themselves and in their traditions. They came to respect themselves. They were catching up in education. No longer did the Hindus dismiss them with a shake of the hand. The University was producing graduates who could fill vacancies in the Government of the country and elsewhere. If there had been no Dacca University the Muslims of Bengal would have remained deprived of their share in the administration of the province and in all other departments of life in which English education was required for filling the posts. Within twenty-five years of the foundation of the University, hundreds of qualified

persons had filled posts in various departments of the provincial Government. Dacca produced journalists, judges, advocates and a number of public spirited men to fight for the cause of their community. The subsequent history of the University shows that Dacca has been capable of training leaders for almost every walk of life. The role of Dacca has continued to expand from day to day and from year to year adding to the prestige, strength and honour of the institution.

The students of Dacca University were students inside the precincts of the University but outside in the country every one of them a messenger of hope in the future of the Muslim community in Bengal. Wherever these boys went, they were received with respect and admiration. They were possessed of a self-confidence that was catching, for they beleived that they had a mission in life to fulfil, to raise the drooping spirits of their people, to inspire hope and confidence among them and to urge them to follow the path of progress and advancement. The pessimism of the Muslims gave way to what was almost a feeling of buoyancy. They had begun to take an interest in trade and commerce and industry. Hope sprang in the hearts of the Muslims.

The direct contribution of the Dacca University to the Pakistan Movement is equally significant. In fact, its role in the realisation of the political goal of Muslim India has yet to be appreciated in its proper perspective. A number of the alumni of the University of Dacca had not only become prominent in the political field in the subcontinent but they were also in the fore-

front of the Pakistan Movement. They were greatly responsible for popularising the Movement in every corner of Bengal and their work in this respect even outside the province should not be minimised. They were actively associated with the Muslim League and not a few were in the Council and policy-making organs of the Muslim League. It was to their credit that no one prominent among them was known to be against the Muslim League and the Pakistan Movement or was actively associated with organisation opposed to Pakistan's ideology. Dacca's claim is unique in this respect. The part played and contribution made by the students and teachers of the Dacca University who were associated with legislatures, law and constitution making bodies, both before and after Independence, is now a matter of history.

The consistent support of the Dacca University students to the Muslim cause and their role in promoting it ever since its foundation form a golden chapter in the history of the contribution of this great seat of learning. These were particularly evident since the visit of the Quaid-i-Azam to Dacca in 1936.

The students of the Dacca University directly participated in the election campaigns of the Muslim League in Bengal as early as 1936. Under the new Constitution of 1935, the general elections were held all over India in 1937. The Muslim League decided to fight the elections on Muslim League tickets. Accordingly League Parliamentary Boards were formed and the Quaid-i-Azam was given over-all authority regarding the nomination of candidates.

He undertook extensive tours of Bengal and set up candidates in almost all the Muslim constituencies. The Muslim League leaders, workers and National Guards rushed to various constituencies to canvass for votes for the League candidates. The Muslim students of the Dacca University spread over all these constituencies and rendered yeoman's service to the League. This was only the beginning of the ultimate success, the results of the elections had far-reaching significance. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, under whose leadership the Krishak Proja Party counted 35 members in its fold, joined the Muslim League after the elections were over. It is generally held that it was the Muslim student community in Bengal that impressed upon Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq the necessity of joining the Muslim League. The performance of the students in the election campaigns, particularly in his own constituency, Patuakhali, had greatly impressed Mr. Huq and his partymen. Shrewd politician and clever statesman that he was he saw that the students were a power to be reckoned with ; he enlisted their support by joining the Muslim League. His entry in the League Camp was a milestone in the Pakistan Movement.

The prominent role of the Dacca University students in the elections in 1946 is well known. The Muslim League was on its trial. It had to disprove the Congress claim that several Muslim groups and parties, like the Nationalists, Ahrars, Jamiatul Ulema-i-Hind, Muslim Majlis, Azad Board, etc. which were opposed to the

League ideology, constituted a strong Muslim block by themselves. So far as the Congress was concerned there was no doubt that it would capture about all Hindu seats. As such the Muslim League also had to vindicate its claim.

These elections had the significance of a kind of referendum, for the Muslim League fought them on two clear-cut issues, namely Pakistan was the national demand of the Muslims of India, and the Muslim League was their authoritative and representative organisation. It faced a strong array of hostile force, the Congress with its sixty year old mighty organisation, propaganda machinery, press, financial backing, and the hostile Muslim groups encouraged by the Congress and Hindu moneyed classes. The League did not have any of these advantages, but it had two priceless assets—the inspiring leadership of the Quaid-i-Azam and a band of sincere and devoted workers imbued with missionary zeal to fight for the national cause. Unpretentious young men formed the vanguard of this army of voluntary workers. In so far as Bengal was concerned, these young men came mainly from the Muslim students of the Dacca University. The magnificent contributions made by the Dacca University students towards the successes in the elections were acknowledged and recognised by all. Dacca students went as volunteers even outside their province in other areas of India to fight the elections along with their volunteer friends. Their untiring efforts along with those of others, bore fruits and results of the elections are now well known facts of history. In the first encounter—

elections to the Central Legislative Assembly—the Muslim League emerged with flying colours. It captured all the thirty Muslim seats, the opposing candidates in many cases forfeiting their deposits. The Congress claimed to be a "national" body representing the Muslims as well as the Hindus, but it could find no Muslim candidates to contest the election on its ticket. The so-called "Nationalist" Muslim candidates sustaind a crushing defeat. The League's success was even more impressive than that of the Congress which won 57 out of 62 general, in other words, Hindu seats. The League's performance in Bengal too was spectacular. The Muslim League captured 113 out of 119 Muslim seats and there again in most of the cases the opponents had lost their securities. Muslim Leaguers were also successful from some special constituencies. The Muslim League's representative status was triumphantly eslablished. For years leaders of Muslim India had worked patiently to unite the subcontinent and to make them conscious of their true destiny. Their efforts bore fruit. The general elections had proved that Muslims were overwhelmingly pro-League, in other words they backed the demand for Pakistan. From now on nothing could obstruct the Muslims in their march to the goal of their freedom.

The transfer of Power in accordance with the Plan of 3rd June, 1947, necessitated decisions to be taken on many important details, including the verdict of the people of the district of Sylhet in Assam, a Muslim majority area and contiguous to East Bengal, on whether it was to be merged with the new

province of Bengal. Differences of opinion at first manifested themselves between the League and the Congress over the procedure to be adopted in ascertaining the wishes of the people of Sylhet district. After protracted discussions on various alternatives, it was finally agreed that voters in Muslim, General (Hindu) and Christian constituencies, from the district of Sylhet for the Assembly elections should constitute the electoral college to which would be referred the question whether Sylhet wished to join East Bengal or not. Muslims were at a disadvantage as the number of the Muslim voters on the eletoral lists did not reflect the true proportion of the Muslim population in the district—54.27 per cent voting strength as against a population of 60.7 per cent. However, the Muslims were able to assert their will through a verdict in favour of the stand taken by the Muslim League. The referendum showed that 239,619 voted for separation from Assam and for joining East Pakistan as against 184,041 votes in favour of the status quo. Ten Muslim leaders, both of Assam and other parts of India, mainly from East Bengal, rushed to different parts of the district of Sylhet and spared no pains and discomfort to see the successful outcome of the results of the referendum. More than the leaders it was the workers and volunteers who were drawn mainly from the students of the Dacca University that worked round the clock, explaining to Muslim voters the importance and significance of the outcome of the referendum. Their efforts and

contribution were greatly responsible for the resounding victory of the Muslims.

The Dacca University served the Muslim cause in diverse ways. Its establishment happily synchronised with the emerging Muslim nationalism in the subcontinent, and in this context the task that devolved on it was as delicate as arduous. Yet it proved equal to it. It could help unfold the potentiality of the Muslims till then firmly denied the rights and privileges of life. The Muslim votaries of the Dacca University did each prove to be an ardent crusader determined to help his community out of the morass of suffering and servitude in which it was. Virtually the Dacca University served to redeem the Muslims, specially of Bengal, from their moral and intellectual stupor and gave them a sense of direction. It was a marvellous spirit of dedication in which it worked to spread more and more of light and sweetness, and its impact was deep and wide enough to help mould the destiny of the suffering Muslims. The vicissitudes and ordeals this University had to undergo to reach its goal are now all a matter of the past. We cannot live the past again. But as a veritable link to that vital past the Dacca University stands to-day as glimmering and vast retaining all its usual tenor, and the nation it helped mould looks up to it with reverence and gratitude and wonders at the towering monument it has left of its achievement to posterity.

IMPORTANT PUBLICATIONS

A History of the Freedom Movement, in Four Volumes
Dhakhirat al-Khawanin, Vol. I & II (Persian text—edited by Dr. S. Moinul Haq)
Ibn Bajjah's 'Ilm al-Nafs (English translation & Notes by Dr. S. M. Ma'soomi)
The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi by Dr. I. H. Qureshi
The Great Revolution of 1857 by Dr. S. Moinul Haq
Ibn Khallikan's Wafayat al-A'yan (M. de Slane's English Translation), Vol. I, III, IV, V, VI, (Vol. VII in Press) edited by Dr. S. Moinul Haq
Ibn Sa'd's Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir, (English Translation), Vol. I, Pts. I & II (Vol. II in Press)
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History of the Faraidi Movement by Dr. M. A. Khan
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